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OLD STREET

COMIC MONTHLY

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September
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A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Welcome to the latest edition of CBM. You, no doubt, have noticed the changes in our magazine since our historic first issue… including our new logo, our new card guide, an expanded Pricing Advisory Network, and three prices in the Comic Book Price Guide section.These changes have been implemented to satisfy the many requests from both dealers and collectors all over North America. We've even moved to new, larger offices and doubled the size of our staff, all in an effort to better serve the collecting community.

Not only that, our monthly Comic & Card Price Guides continue to expand, giving you the most accurate and reliable information available anywhere. In fact, I am pleased to announce that last month's issue of CBM was a complete sellout! I want to take this opportunity to publicly express my personal appreciation and thanks for the continuing and loyal support of our special advisors. They work very hard to insure that fandom gets the best pricing information possible.

Along with our monthly magazine, Overstreet Publications has been very busy working on a number of new projects, like our quarterly magazine, Overstreet's ADVANCED Collector™. The premiere issue, which features our new Golden Age Price Update section, is nearly sold out. Your enthusiastic support has been heartening, and issue #2 is already shaping up to be even more of a milestone. A special thanks to everyone who supported this ground breaking venture!

But we aren't resting on our laurels. I've been working with our editors and researchers around the clock on several other new projects for 1994 that are sure to be equally as exciting. They include The Overstreet Comic Book Collector's Guide™, The Overstreet Premium Ring Price Guide™, and The Overstreet Big Little Book Price Guide™. "Serious Price Guides for Serious Collectors" is more than just a slogan to us. These new Guides are being produced with the same attention to detail that collectors have come to expect from Overstreet.

And there's one more big announcement! Through special arrangement with the AbleSoft Co. of Virginia, our monthly pricing data will now be available on disc for both IBM and Apple computers! AbleSoft plans to provide collectors with the most up-to-date information on a monthly basis! Look for the first AbleSoft advertisement in this issue.

Whether its pricing information, marketplace news stories, great articles and features, or new listings of the latest titles and cards… you can depend on Overstreet for reliable and accurate reporting!

If you're planning to attend either the San Diego or Philadelphia Comic Conventions, I hope you will drop by our booth and say hello. Until next issue, happy collecting!

Robert M. Overstreet

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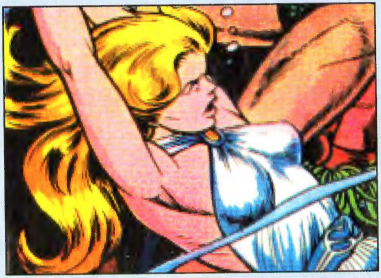
© Prize Comics



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The winner of the Arcomics reader's poll: Aegis.

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So Much To Talk About... So Little Space!

It's been an exciting month at Overstreet Publications! There's so much to discuss and so little space to discuss it in. But I'll try...

(1) The big news around here, lately, has been the release of our new quarterly magazine, Overstreet's ADVANCED Collector. The phone has been literally ringing off the hook with messages of congratulations and requests for subscriptions... and our shipping department has been working overtime to fill the mountain of orders as fast as possible. Everyone on our staff has asked me to express our sincerest appreciation to the many collectors from all over North America who have supported this monumental project. Your positive response is truly appreciated. Many who have seen OAC (with its new Golden Age Price Update section) have suggested that it will not only become the reading staple of Golden Age and Silver Age collectors, but will also introduce many new hobbyists to the fascinating world of 1933-54 comics and related collectibles.

(2) A few weeks back In Nashville, Tennessee, I had the privilege of attending the Jim Shooter Seminar and found it to be quite educational (and fun). Jim is exceptionally knowledgeable about the comic book industry and his presentation was very enlightening. I spoke with a number of collectors and future artists at the conclusion, and I must say that I agreed with their general consensus; namely that the seminar was full of excellent insights into a very complex business and provided some useful tips to help someone "break in" to the industry. It was personally gratifying to see so many enthusiastic young artists and writers take advantage of the opportunity to access a "seasoned veteran" like Mr. Shooter. I feel he deserves a great deal of credit for contributing his time, expertise, and encouragement so willingly (and on a gratis basis).

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

(3) A big Overstreet welcome to the newest member of our editorial staff, Nick Wyche. Nick will be helping with some of the editorial chores as well as contributing a regular review column, the premiere entry of which appears in this issue. Nick is not only an avid comic book collector, he is also a voracious reader! And in these days of investment and polybags, comic book *readers* are getting harder and harder to find!

(4) Thanks also to the folks at ARComics for their help with Overstreet's Give Away Gimmick™ #5. Glenn and the boys are turning the Trading Card world up side down with their "lenticular innovations" and most fans report that their efforts have been the source of a great deal of interest and fun for trading card collectors.

(5) I attended the first San Diego Comic Book Convention way back in 1970! (also the year of the first Overstreet Price Guide). Since then, it has grown to become the largest and most exciting comic book collecting event in the country, it's expansion a perfect parallel to the development and growth of our hobby. I've made "The Con" the central activity of my Summer schedule for the last 23 years, and this year is no exception. If you're planning to attend, please come by the Overstreet Publications table and say hello! I look forward to meeting and swapping a few collector's stories.

Until then, may you fill the holes on your want list!

Best,

Gary

Gary M. Carter

WANTED: BARKS COMICS

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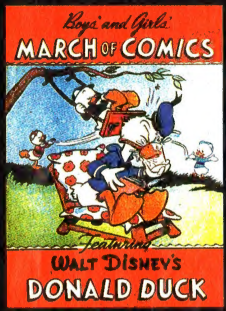
March of Comics #4, © WDC



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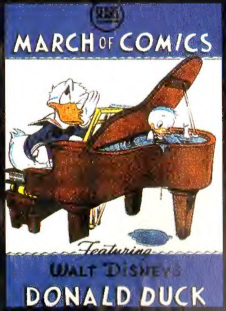
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NICK'S PICKS

Tired of wading through the barrage of supposedly hot comics, only to find they really weren't that great? Having trouble finding a comic to actually read? Look no further, because every month I'll be filling these pages with the best of comics' recent offerings, rating each book on a scale of 1-5 stars. And away we go...

★★★½

***Flash* #80 (DC):** DC has added yet another name to it's roster of hot new artists. Along with Chris Sprouse, Stuart Immomen, & Lee Moder, DC brings us Mike Wieringo on *The Flash*. Mikes clean, graphic storytelling style is reminiscent of a 90's Curt Swan in it's grace & beauty. Combined with Mark Waid's writing, *The Flash* is climbing to new heights.

© DC Comics

© DC Comics

★★★

***Wonder Woman* #78 (DC):** Another of DC's old guard characters that is reaching new heights with a great new creative team. Writer Bill Loebs is taking Princess Diana on a journey through newer, tougher adventures; Fast food employment! Also, Lee Moder brings a fresh, new look to Diana and is yet another artist who could be said to be working in the new "DC Style" with it's emphasis on strong storytelling and good strong graphics.

★★★★

***Legionnaires* #6 (DC):** Remember what it was like reading *Legion of Superheroes* as a kid? The fun, excitement, and wonder? Well, guess what? It's back! Tom & Mary Bierbaum or bringing back the characters that we knew and loved in a style fit for the 90's. Chris Sprouse & Karl Story provide some of the best art this fans ever seen!

© DC Comics

© Marvel

★★★

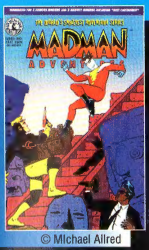
***New Warriors* #38 (Marvel):** While on the subject of Fabian's fabulous work, one criminally under-rated title is the *New Warriors*. What started off as a seemingly lame copy of the *Teen Titans* has matured into a good title. You can tell this book if Fabe's favorite; he actually develops these characters into 3 dimensional people. Yeah, they do wear their underwear on the outside, but you actually feel that you know these people and you care what happens. Also, not to slight Mark Bagley, but the art has taken a quantum leap since Darick Robertson took over. His facility for facial expressions and body language brings a believable visual edge to the book.

★★½

***Deadpool* #2 (Marvel):** Comics haven't made me laugh out loud since Giffen & DeMatteis' run on *Justice League*, but Fabian Nicieza has done it. This stuff is funny! Marvel's manic, motor-mouthed mere comes of with some of the most memorable scenes I've seen in ages. With the artistic assistance of Joe Madureria, Nicieza pulls of the closet thing to the Die-Hard movies in comics. The characterization leaves a little something to be desired, but it is non-stop action from panel one all the way to the end. Way cool!

© Marvel

By Nick Wyche



© Michael Allred

★★★★★

***MADMAN* #3 (Kitchen Sink):** And while we're mentioning Mike Allred, if you haven't checked out *Madman* yet, you should be ashamed of yourself. Number three of *Madman Adventures* should be on the stand soon and the ash can I'm looking at makes it look like Allred just getting wound up. Hey, any book that stars a re-animated, psychic, amnesiac, superhero, whose weapon of choice is a Duncan yo-yo is groovy in my book. Madman's experiences on a camping trip with his employer, Dr. Boiffard, are not to be missed. Route 66 it ain't.

© DC Comics

★★★

***Chain Gang War* #3 (DC):** I have to admit to not being the biggest fan of Judge Dredd's co-creator John Wagner. But, in this new project he's developed 3 interesting characters who've come together to fight crime and criminals that they feel are slipping through the cracks. The hard-bitten, fast-paced story is brought to life by Dave Johnson's pencils. Johnson is a member of Gailen Studios, the group of artists poised to knock Homage Studios out of the hottest artists category.

© Mark Martin/Jim Woodring

★★★★

***Tantalizing Stories* #3 (Kitchen Sink):** The polar opposite from *Black Dogs* in seriousness is Mark Martin's Montgomery Wart and Jim Woodring's Frank In The River, both of whom can be found in every issue of *Tantalizing Tales*. TT is a book that is literally fun for all ages, even though the kids might not always get it. In a semi-surrealistic Walt Kelly-ish style Martin & Woodring manage to pull off well-rounded entertainment.

★★★★

***The Incredible Hulk* #409 (Marvel):** Okay kids, we are all already aware that Peter David is probably the best writer of the superhero genre working today, so any more praise would be superfluous. Well heck, I'll do it any way! David has the unique ability to deftly weave plot and characterization together in a way not seen in years. Who'd have thunk it possible that Rick Jones would actually seem like a real person, or Betty Banner was a strong, competent individual and not the 2 dimensional cut-outs they'd seemed to be for years. Grade A stuff! (Oh yeah, Gary Frank kicks butt, too!)

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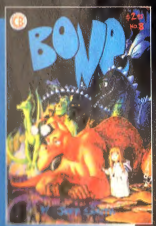


© Jeff Smith

★★★★★

***BONE* #8 (Cartoon Books):** And while we're on the topic of Kelly-ish creators the most immediate name to present itself is Jeff Smith. Smith's book *Bone* is in the direct lineage of Herriman's Krazy Kat and Kelly's Pogo. The story of the three Bone cousins getting kicked out of their home town and then trying to make their way back is filled with adventure, romance, and most of all, humor enough to satisfy the most jaded of collectors. ■

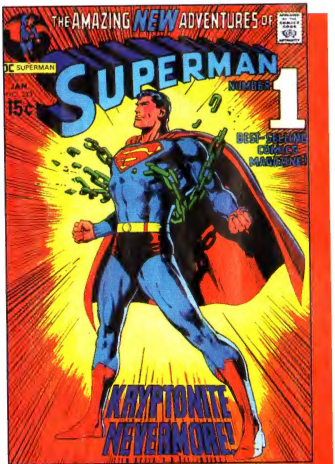
WILL THE REAL SUPERMAN PLEASE STAND UP?!

While comic fandom anxiously waits to learn which, if any, of the four claimants is the REAL Superman, I am reminded that the Superman I grew up with died in 1986, when artist/storyteller John Byrne revised Superman in DC's *Man of Steel* mini series. Byrne was reported to have said: "If I don't tell you it happened to Superman, then it didn't." Byrne's Superman was indeed a different character. Clark Kent a jock in high school. Pa Kent alive. Superman more fallible and a great deal less powerful. I am not criticizing - Superman's death has made me realize just how much I have come to like this new Superman.

Yet Byrne was not the first storyteller to try to "humanize" the last Son of Krypton. And that first attempt, made in 1971 by writer Denny O'Neil, artists Curt Swan and Murphy Anderson, and editor Julius Schwartz, may hold the secret of the identity of today's real Superman.

By 1970 Superman was in need of a face lift. Nearly infallible and able to move entire planets out of their orbit, Supes had simply become too powerful. This god like power led writers to overuse Kryptonite, Superman's only significant weakness. By the late 1960's, Kryptonite was as common as grass, and every pick-pocket seemed to own a piece. So an ingenious plot was crafted that eliminated all the Kryptonite on earth, substantially reduced Superman's powers, and highlighted his human weaknesses. The plot unfolded like this:

***Superman* #233** (Jan 1971) - The saga of the "Sand Superman" begins and continues through most of the next ten issues. "Superman Breaks Loose" begins with a stunning cover that shows



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Superman breaking Kryptonite chains. A Kryptonite engine that promises to provide cheap electricity sets off a chain reaction that hurls Superman into the desert sand and destroys all the Kryptonite on earth. Superman regains consciousness a few minutes later, shaken but unhurt. Hours later, Superman happens to fly over the spot he landed and feels a strange weakness. The next day; "it stirs...a thing created from soil and rock and a burst of raw energy...cast in the mold of Superman...and it lives!"

***Superman* #234** (Feb 1971) - Superman gets his first glimpse of the Sand-Superman. Over the next several issues, Sandy shadowed Superman's every step. Each near encounter momentarily weakened Superman.

***Superman* #237** (May 1971) - Sandy and Superman physically touch, and the resulting explosion leaves Superman substantially weaker. Resembling a darker version of Superman himself, the Sand-Superman can now speak. Questioned as to who he is, he replies: "I am a being woven from your mind...your heart...your soul! Can you not see? I am you!"

***Superman* #238** (Jun 1971) - A still weakened Superman asks for his double's help with a band of terrorists. A striking cover portrays the scene, played near the Fortress of Solitude, where the Sand-Superman refuses. "NO! I am not human! I care nothing for you and your world!"

***Superman* #240** (Jul 1971) - A completely powerless Superman seeks out Wonder Woman's oriental tutor, I-Ching, for help in recovering his lost powers. A trio of killers from the anti-Superman gang pick this moment to attack. Superman manages to defeat them, but not before receiving a serious blow to the head.

***Superman* #241** (Aug 1971) - I-Ching succeeds in returning Superman's powers to him, but the blow to his head leaves Superman dangerously erratic. To undo his mistake, I-Ching (along with Wonder Woman) sets out to find the Sand-Superman. Once found, I-Ching identifies Sandy as a being from the realm of Quarrm: "A place where neither men nor things exist...only unformed, shapeless beings!" The explosion which destroyed all the Kryptonite on earth momentarily

By Tony Starks

THE AMAZING NEW ADVENTURES OF
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PLEASE...
I AM NOT MEANT TO CARE ABOUT NOTHING
EXTRA! A NEW STORY ABOUT THE FABULOUS WORLD OF KRYPTON!

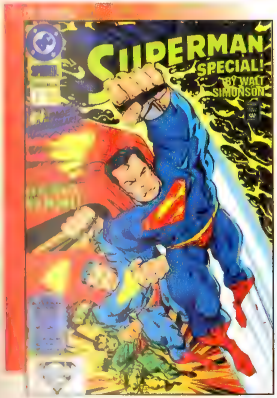
opened a rift between our universe and Quarrm. An invisible mist escaped, passed over Superman's unconscious body and into the desert sand below. Charged with Superman's energy, the bits of sand changed, took form, and became alive. I-Ching and Wonder Woman plan a trap to return Superman's powers to Sandy, but Superman escapes before much of his energy is absorbed. Meanwhile, a second Quarrmer has slipped into our universe, and animates a parade float in the shape of a Chinese War-God. When Superman investigates the disturbance, he has his remaining powers are drained.

***Superman* #242** (Sept 1971) - The Sand-Superman saga concludes. While a powerless Superman lies in the hospital recovering from his injuries, the War-God runs amok through Metropolis. The Sand-Superman attempts to stop the War-God, but lacks the power. "It possesses at least two thirds of Superman's strength, while I have only the remaining third!" The fact that he chooses to fight confuses Sandy: "Why? Could it be that I have taken on Superman's mind—his soul—as well as his body?"

The War-God comes after Superman in the hospital, but as soon as they touch Superman gains back half the power taken from him. Sandy and Superman join forces to drive the War-God back to Quarrm, then Superman demands to know what his double wants. "I want LIFE! I want to be Superman—and so you must die!" The fight between the two appears to destroy the earth, but the battle was only imaginary - a trance induced by I-Ching. The Sand-Superman decides to return to Quarrm. I-Ching offers to return to Superman the power Sandy has taken from him, but Superman refuses. "I have seen the dangers having too much power. I am human—I can make mistakes!"

The Sand-Superman saga was made part of the post-Byrne continuity with a retelling of the story in *Superman Special* #1 (1992). While the story by Walter Simonson is essentially similar to the original, several significant differences emerge.

The explosion which destroys all the Kryptonite, and creates Superman's double, occurs as a result of Lex Luthor's attempt to manufacture Kryptonite. Luthor helps the Sand-Superman set a trap, which Superman escapes with the aid of Jimmy Olsen and the Newsboy Legion. Superman flees to the Fortress of Solitude with Sandy in hot pursuit. This final battle in the Fortress very possibly holds the answer to the question: "Who is the real Superman?" Was Superman triumphant, as readers were led to believe, or did the Sand-Superman completely absorb the powers and persona of the Man of Steel, taking on his identity? If one reads pages 44-48, the outcome of the battle is certainly unclear, and the victor is momentarily confused as to who and where he is. Is it possible that Doomsday killed the Sand-Superman, and the real Superman still lies comatose in the Fortress of Solitude?



Fans should not have to wait long to learn the answers to these questions, as the return of the "real" Superman is scheduled for mid August. Regardless of the outcome, *Superman* #233-242 and *Superman Special* #1 represent fine storytelling at bargain prices. #233-238 guide for $9.00 each in NM, #240-242 and Special #1 are $5.00 or less (#239 is all reprints). And if it turns out that these issues hold the secret to Superman's death and rebirth, watch out! ■

THOSE PESKY MARVEL TRADING CARDS!

From Crunch 'n Munch

Above: The ad for the Crunch 'n Munch trading cards that appeared on the back of Marvel Comics.

If you've been out to your local market lately, you may have noticed the Crunch 'n Munch box with Spider-Man holding six cards and announcing "FREE INSIDE! ONE MARVEL COMICS COLLECTORS EDITION TRADING CARD (COLLECT ALL SIX)."

The offer is now over, and collectors all over the planet are scrambling to get the last few boxes in an attempt to get all six cards.

The helpful folks at AMERICAN HOME FOOD PRODUCTS, INC.. (who were kind enough to send us information about the cards on very short notice) told CBM that "regrettably, we are completely out of cards, the offer is over, and we are hoping we don't get any more phone inquiries... because the phone has been ringing off the hook, and all we can say is we are totally and completely out of cards. Even our employees didn't get any samples because of the demand for them".

In our part of the country, the Wolverine and Storm cards seem more readily available. Most of the collectors surveyed seemed to think that the Super Heroes card was the toughest to get, but all the data is not in yet. We will give you an update in a later issue of CBM.

The poster offer on the back is still in force, so save your pennies and proofs of purchase. As posters go, this one is great! ■

All Images © Marvel Comics/American Home Food Products

Briefer's "Prize" Monster

omic books have produced some great heroes, and a few great anti-heroes as well. The Submariner (in both his Timely and Marvel incarnations) comes quickly to mind, and many consider the Punisher to be more anti than hero.

But in my opinion, the number one anti-hero is Dick Briefer's version of Frankenstein. After being hated, and tortured, and generally abused for over a century, it's easy to see where this monster got his attitude. And while we're not supposed to stand up and cheer as this experiment-gone-awry indulges in murder, mayhem, and wreaks his vengeance upon humankind... it is certainly easy to read-in awe and understanding (and even some sympathy) for this reconstituted creature who knows no better than to hurt those who have hurt him.

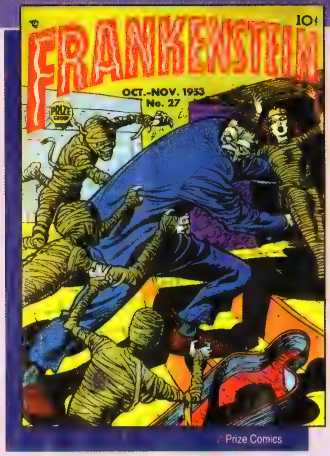
Dick Briefer had been using Frankenstein's monster as a comic character for over a decade before this grimmest-of-all series began in 1952... when horror was a hot genre. Much of Briefer's previous Frankenstein work had been in the humorous vein, including the first 17 issues of *Frankenstein*, from Prize Publications, which began in 1945.

Unlikely as it sounds, as World War II was wrapping up, humor comics were "hot", and the monster made a capable clown, cavorting with various ghosts and goblins in more or less standard "gag situations". The post-war laugh marathon wound down in 1949, and the "funny" Frankenstein was laid to rest. Three years later, *Frankenstein* #18 hit the stands.

This amazing revival issue (dated March 1952) tells how two scavengers open a huge iron door in the ruins of Castle Frankenstein- and the arrival of air into the sealed chamber brings the monster back to life. Their reward is a quick death, and then the monster heads into town to run amok. The besieged villagers send a telegram to America, to the great-grandson of Dr. Frankenstein, who comes to Europe to help control the menace that his family created. After several skirmishes, the monster eventually stows away on the ship that the great-grandson takes back to the U.S.A. And though they do manage to drive it off the ship, the issue ends with the monster swimming towards shore...

In the next issue (#19), the Frankenstein family fades out of the picture, and the monster begins a series of episodic adventures in America, many of

By Pat S. Calhoun



which bring him up against characters almost as strange as himself. Issue #18 had three short Frankenstein tales and a fantasy back-up, #19 had two slightly-longer Frankensteins and a fantasy back-up, and #20 had one 13-page Frankenstein feature and two fantasy back-up stories. Briefer used the longer length to good effect: this is a fully-realized novelette, in which the monster takes on a zombie cult in a cave in the Florida Everglades.

Dick Briefer scripted the Frankenstein series as well as drawing them, and though his fame is mostly as an artist, there was nothing wrong with his narrative skills. Issue #21 contains a particularly brilliant yarn which takes place atop a mesa in Arizona.

A scientist, doing chemical research into evolution, produces a prehistoric jungle... complete with dinosaurs and a wildcat who has evolved into human form. The arrival of a newspaper reporter and the Frankenstein monster give this wild cat-girl a reason to choose between her animal and human sides. Again, the format of the book is a 13-page lead followed by two adequate, but not astounding, fantasy fillers.

Issue #22 had Frankie tangling with a werewolf, and as the series progressed, Briefer came up with the idea of reprising some of the humor story concepts from the 1940's issues into the horror mode.

Issue #27 (Oct-Nov 1953) mixes the monster up with some mummies, as had happened (in a lighter vein) in #3 back in 1946.

The story starts with a couple of entrepreneurs who have trapped the monster in a block of ice, and plan on carting the immobilized giant around the world as a traveling sideshow. When their plane crashes in the desert, a nightmare of suspense begins.

In spite of the fact that the marooned passengers face death by hunger and thirst, they must make it their top priority to keep the freezer running... for if the ice melts, they face an even more terrible doom! By the time they run out of gas, they almost welcome this; for by now the thirst is so intense that the water from the ice looks like a very precious prize...

The later issues are the most brutal of all, for in 1954 the shadow of coming censorship (via the Comics Code Authority) inspired the industry to a final orgy of gore and violence. These latter numbers also have two (slightly shorter) Frankenstein stories in each issue.

Issue #30's story features an encounter with a sinister sculptor. Frankie eventually administers a kind of justice to this insane artist who has killed to further his career.

Issue #31's "The Monster and the Tree of Death" has some spooky slayings, and the second Frankenstein story involves some very grisly revenge.

The last issue, #33 (Oct-Nov 1954) is a good one. The cover for "Death O'clock", is an almost exact redo of the last humor cover (#17), and the accompanying tale is gruesome enough, but even here the monster's motivation is always understandable. Also in that last ish, "Frankenstein and the Plant", ends the series in a battle with a balmy botanist, and again shows Briefer's ability to serve up imaginative combinations of shock value and good storytelling. My intent here is certainly not to disparage the humor issues; they, too, were a valid and inventive interpretation of the character. In fact, one of my main points of praise is Briefer's sureness with both forms.

Also worth noting is that late 1954 marked the beginning of the end for Prize Publications... one of many companies that faded during this era. They shut down all but their romance titles in 1956, and then sold the last two of these to DC in 1963. ■

Opposite: Frankenstein #18
Above: Frankenstein #27
Below: Frankenstein #20

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CBM Market Reports

JOHN HAUSER
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I've just come back from the Chicago Comic Con and there was a big increase in the number of dealers from last year. There did not seem to be an equal increase in the number of customers.

There was a definite lack of high grade books at this show. Most dealers seemed to have runs of books in VG but very few books in higher grades. Silver Age DC's and esoteric 50's books sold well at the Chicago Con, but Marvel's were barely moving.

Golden Age - This end of the market seems to sell slower than Silver Age. This could be because these books are harder to get.

Recent GA Sales - *World's Finest* #26 VG/FN $120; *Captain America* #33 VF- $400

Pre-Code Horror - These are my favorite books to collect and sell. Recently I have noticed more and more people are collecting these books. They sell in any grade. I've sold a near complete Atlas collection in the last few months.

Recent Sales - *Witchcraft* #5 $70; *Eerie Adventures* #1 FN $45, *Forbidden Worlds* #3 GD $40; *Adventures into the Unknown* #53 GD $18

Silver Age - Over the years it has gotten harder to find comics from this time period. Now as prices rise, it is harder and harder to afford them. They still sell in all grades. The only exception seems to be those key expensive books in VG such as *Brave and Bold* #28

Recent Sales - *Justice League* #1 FN/VF $900; *Strange Tales* #110 NM $1600; *Action* #252 VF/FN $200; *Amazing Spider-Man* #50 VF- $175.

In closing, I would like to say I have noticed more and more people are only collecting books in NM. As a long time collector, these trends bother me. A VF book is quite collectible. In today's market of people charging and paying multiples of guide for NM books a VF book at guide might be a great investment. Some material is so rare or sought after that I feel any copy is fun to own.

It's been said before but bears repeating. Comics were made to be read and enjoyed. Even though you may pay 3x guide for a NM book, it's still OK to read it! Happy collecting.

MICHAEL TIERNEY
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This Summer has proven to be a challenge for the comics industry. More people are collecting than ever before and publishers seem to be inundating the market like never before. There is a positive side to this. The independents have gone superhero crazy, and Marvel has started experimenting with diverse material at low sales levels they previously wouldn't have considered. Exploration used to be the mainstay of independents and Marvel was exclusively superheroes. This role reversal has given a lot of good new talent an opportunity to show their stuff. Image is already backing out of the meat grinder and redefining their strategy. By winter we should see who the survivors are, and we might have better quality and more diversity than ever before.

Defiant - Defiant has come out of the blocks with the short print run on the Plasm Binder. This item is rumored to be selling at astounding prices that caused everyone in our area to lose interest... no one buying the cards, and many canceling orders of subsequent Defiant releases. Talk of a second printing has fallen on deaf ears. Since retailers ordered the Plasm Cards in tandem with the Binders, I feel it would be appropriate if they were returnable. It is the slowest selling card we've ever stocked.

DC - DC Comics' Knightfall storyline has been a real success story, dominating the new and back issue sales in our area. The Reign of Supermen has run too long and a lot of people lost interest.

Valiant - Valiant Comics' serial number contest is not selling extra copies, but is a nice bonus for their regular collectors. There has been little speculation on first appearances.

Bronze Age - Titles continue to be king of back issue sales, but with a lot of changes. Marvels with Liefeld and McFarlane art are stone cold. Ghost Rider, New Mutants, Cable appearances, Robin, and even pre-nineties Batmans and X-Men have slipped into the refrigerator.

Acquisitions of Note - *Avengers* #1 VG, #2 VF, and #4 GD.

Over the last year there has been a lot of retailer concern over a "Blockbuster" type chain entering the direct sales market. There is a chain in our area (a Waldens/B. Daltons type music and bookseller) aggressively doing just that. The chain store is here.

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Well, Summer is here and this should prove to be a make-or-break period for many comic publishers. As more and more new comics are being published, fans are facing tough choices on what to collect. I don't believe the market can support the number of titles being produced over the long term and I think we'll see reduced output from many companies by fall. Our overall sales are well up over last year, but sales on individual titles have been slowly declining as the dollars are being spread over a larger number of books.

Marvel - There is such a thing as "too much of a good thing" and I feel Marvel seems to be trying to prove it. Many collectors in our area are tiring of all the multi-part crossovers, guest appearances, and new titles with holographic, foil-embossed, die-cut covers that sell for double the regular cover price. Sales on most Marvel titles have been falling steadily with the hardest hit being Marvel U.K., Heavy Hitters, and many of the mid-line titles. The top sellers (Spider-Man, X-Men, etc.) have been holding their own while Ren & Stimpy continues to be a strong seller. Two bright spots in Marvel's line-up include Avengers and Daredevil. Sales on both titles have increased while the storylines have been taking some interesting turns (especially the return of Elektra in *Daredevil* #319 - a book to watch).

Back Issue - Sales have been pretty flat with the amount of money being devoted to new issues lately. Spider-Man, X-Men and related back issues continue to have steady sales though. Recent sales include *Spectacular Spider-Man* #1 $40; *Web of Spider-Man* #1 VF $20; *Spider-Man 2099* #1 $4, and the Spider-Man hologram issues at guide.

DC - Knightfall continues to be the hottest series in comics right now. While everyone is waiting for *Batman* #500 to arrive; they are also buying up earlier parts of the series. Currently part 1 sells for $5, 2-4 for $4 each and 5-10 for $2 each, but prices will likely rise soon, as we are running out of every issue. Pre-Knightfall issues are also in high demand but are somewhat harder to find. Prices are as follows: *Vengeance of Bane* $20; *Sword of Azrael* #1-4 $10 each; *Batman* #488 $6, #489 $10, #490 $5, #491 $3.50; *Detective* #556 $5, #557 & #558 $3 each.

As far as the rest of DC goes, *Superman* #75 continues to sell steadily at $28 but interest seems to be dropping off on the other related issues. Reign of the Supermen started strong but has been leveling off as many people think the series has gone on too long. Other titles doing well are DC Universe: Trinity, Flash (the Barry Allen storyline), Bloodlines and the long-awaited Batman/Grendel. DC sales have been very consistent for us, I think due to the fact that they try to appeal to readers rather than investors.

Independents - The best word I could use to describe both Image and Valiant for us right now would be "stagnant". Neither company has had a blockbuster, in-your-face bestseller lately so there hasn't been much speculation by collectors. Most of the early issues from both companies continue to sell well, but more recent issues are very common and I think unlikely to rise in value any time soon.

Recent Sales - *Cyberforce* #1 $10, #2 $5; *Shadowhawk* #1 $16, #2 $6; *Spawn* #1 & 4 $12 each.

Independent - The biggest hit this month has to be Jurassic Park. We sold out of #1 during the first week of the movies' release and could have sold a lot more if there had been any available. Hopefully, the rest of the series will ship soon while interest is high.

Silver Age - There's not much to report in this area since last month. Between a lack of quality books available and the current new issue glut, there hasn't been a lot of activity. Low grade Marvels and DCs sell fairly well if priced at or below guide. With any luck we'll get a break from this drought of high grade books soon and I'll have more to talk about.

Well, that's it for this month. This is definitely turning into the year of the Bat (although some dinosaurs are doing pretty well too). See you next month.

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Hello again from New Mexico. The report from Albuquerque is that Marvel UK titles, 2099 books, & Punisher series books are not selling. I guess most people are resisting the "Marvel Marketing Ploy" which includes what I think is less than effective art & storytelling. I wish Marvel would drop about 1/2 of their titles and hire better artists and writers in order to better compete in today's market. In our area nobody is going for the Marvel crossovers and Maximum Carnage did poorly.

Silver Age - The market is hangin' in there with key early issues of Spider-Man & FF selling briskly. While early issues of Marvel are selling, the 1966 to 1978 issues are not. The only way to sell these issues is to sell them at 1/2 guide. Even then some issues still don't sell. There is an over abundance of most Marvel 70's issues. Even alleged Key issues such as *Captain America* #100, *Iron Man* #1, *Nick Fury* #1, and *Hulk* #102, seem to be in every dealers inventory. Supply far exceeds demand and I sug-

gest a price decrease might be in order. I suggest lower grade issues (FN and below) should be priced down because every dealer seems to have them in ample supply. Nuff said.

I have received a lot of mail, most of it from people who are trying to sell their collections and I really appreciate all the people who have written. Unfortunately I can't afford to travel to see newer books. I suggest you check with your local dealer in order to get the best value for your collection. See you in San Diego and have a great Summer!

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Hello! This is my first report for this fine publication and I would like to begin by giving a brief history of comicdom here in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Manitoba has always been a strong center for comic book collecting. In the 1960's thru to the 1970's we were fortunate to have four of the biggest collector/dealers in Canada residing in our city; Doug Sulipa, Calvin Slobodian, Ken Mitchell and Joe Krolik were all collecting, hunting, and hoarding comics for their respective customers - Doug, Joe, and Ken especially were active throughout Manitoba finding some incredible collections - Calvin and Doug both had a strong mail order business in the 1960's - 1970's which brought many rarer comics into our burg. As well as having a strong golden to modern stock of comics, these people also started many, many people collecting in these early years! Because of this, comics have grown and prospered and the number of collector/dealers has also grown due to the early start generated by these four comic pioneers!

Current Market - Ours consists of seven main dealers competing in the downtown area, and a dealer or two in each different suburb throughout the city! Joe is active in the new comic market under the store name of Styx (4 stores in Winnipeg alone) and he also manages to effectively run a strong new comics/related items distribution center for store owners, (check out his UP n' Coming Magazine)! So, things are pretty busy in our market; lots of competition between the store owners not to mention the independent collector/dealers who keep things hopping! We also host a handful of smaller conventions each year; all have been moderately to very successful and plans are in motion to have our 1st 2-3 super shows!

New Market - It is flooded, but new comics in general are still selling well!! Marvel and DC seem to be fairly even in sales; with Dark Horse/Valiant/Image all closely vying for 3rd spot. I personally read a good portion of new titles and see the following trends:

DC - Vertigo titles were slow for the 1st month or two and have now really picked up in sales due to the excellent "mature" writing! It was also nice to see my old friend Jonah Hex come to life again in the Vertigo universe. Batman and Superman titles are of course selling well - this has helped our DC back issues sales to blossom. Flash, Spectre, Legion '93, and the Justice League titles are all holding their own. *Catwoman #1* is doing well due to the excellent storyline in the past Showcase issues. The Bloodline saga is fun, action packed reading but left a Marvelish taste in my mouth - all these new characters and monsters going in no particular direction!? DC mini series do not sell well and a few lesser character titles are steadily slipping in sales (Green Lantern and Starman to name a few).

Marvel - Marvel titles, for the most part are moderate to strong sellers except for the Epic line which has not had epic sales here! *Maximum Carnage* and *Sabretooth #1* have boosted the interest once again in Marvel and in the 2099 universe, Doom and Spider-Man are the strongest sellers. The Marvel Unlimited line is interesting but, the high cover price is stopping the unlimited titles from selling well; if the price is the same for #2 and up, I predict it is sure to sit on the shelf! *Ren & Stimpy* reached an all time high this month; #1 $22; #2 $18; #3 $12; #4 $9

Many people seem to be getting bored with Marvel and are trying new alternative & DC titles to keep interested. Marvel comics have the flare, color, and gimmicks to keep the younger and/or newer collector interested, but older comic collectors report that the writing leaves them wanting! Many have gone over to Dark Horse, DC, and some other well written alternative comics for enjoyment!

Alternative Titles - There has been a definite slow down in Valiant new and back issue sales except for X-O Man-O-War and Shadowman, which are both still selling well. The more expensive titles; such as Magnus and Solar, have peaked and are now too high-priced for the average collector in our area! Turok is doing well as would any dinosaur book in this Jurassic movie age!

The newest Image titles are popular but most dealers ordered lots of copies 2-3 months ago when Image was at its' market peak. Now that the Image market has leveled off; dealers are finding themselves with excess copies! Here Spawn is still the #1 back issue seller for Image (#1 selling for $16), 1963 titles bombed even though it is a good 60's spoof book; Savage Dragon is a strong seller and so is Shadowhawk

Topps comics are slow sellers except for Jurassic Park and Dracula. I enjoyed seeing Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko art again, but people in our area do not seem to be willing to give these titles a chance

Continuity has had a strong month; we have sold-out completely all new #1's from this exceptional company. I think their quality art, good writing, and second-to-none printing quality are major factors in their success. Back issues from the 80's are hard-to-find and, surprisingly, only one dealer that I know of has actively tried to buy all available issues! Continuity could be hot to trot!

Now Comics has been a steady seller! Married with Children topping the TV back issue sales; new issues of Green Hornet sell out almost immediately and back issue sales sell moderately well!

I've had success selling the Vampirella series by Harris - all issues have sold-out and there have been numerous requests for back issues.

As I have said before, the market is flooded and only the strong will survive! Good luck to all contenders!

As far as 1960's and 1970's back issues are concerned, business has been good even though Canada is going through a major recession and the new comics market has removed excess money usually made available for back issues!

Old comics are readily available and I have been hard pressed to keep up with the buying. Many GD to FN Dell, Gold Key, Charlton, etc.... are being offered for sale by collectors whom are feeling the recessions' pinch. These comics in turn have been selling to a variety of collectors in Winnipeg and through the mail for about the guide price with some issues fetching a higher price if they are in at least FN or better! I collect people's want lists and always have them on hand when going through new arrivals

The Cartoon/TV older titles are doing well and are hard to keep in stock (*Flintstones, Jetsons, Popeye*). Dell westerns in lower to medium grade sell well for me, always have!! Gold Keys are plentiful except for the higher priced key books (*Jonny Quest, Magnus, Solar, Turok, Space Ghost #1*, to name a few harder to get items).

Charlton Comics are finally starting to sell! The DC/Charlton characters such as Blue Beetle, Captain Atom, Peacemaker, Thunderbolt sat for the longest time and have just recently moved at the guide price! The Hanna-Barbera titles are steady movers, as are the older fantastic Ditko issues! Warren magazines are requested more often these days. Vampirella and Famous Monsters of Filmland have always sold well; with Creepy and Eerie being moderate sellers. The Harris revival issues have led to a renewed interest in the above mentioned titles and Warren magazines may yet see an increase in the near future.

The DC Silver Age comics only seemed to sell in FN or better for the longest time; now sales for GD to VG have increased as collectors realized how difficult they are to find in high grade. The 70's titles are reasonably priced and are good sellers; with a lot of attention being given to Kirby titles. Old Marvel Comics sales have slowed to almost a grind. The strong sales we saw over the past two years have been overshadowed by new comic sales and it seems the investors are going for the better, low-priced comic companies such as DC, Charlton, Gold Key, Dell, etc ...titles which still have lots of room to go up in price!!!

That's all for now!

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The battle lines have been drawn and both collector and investor alike are reaching deeper than ever into their pockets, causing prices to continue to soar. Both our store and our mail order service have been besieged with requests for ultra high grade books, causing many key books to go for multiples of guide. The demand has reached such a frenzy, that as dealers, we are forced to pay guide for certain books, and in several instances such as *House of Secrets #92* and *Fantastic Four #48* guide and a half. Golden Age books, especially DC in any condition, fly out the door.

Golden Age sales include: *All Star #1* VF $4000, *Batman #6* VF $1200; *Flash #1* VG #3500, and *Detective #67* VG+ $250.

50's Horror - Not much activity this month, but that doesn't mean Horror isn't one of the fastest growing genres for comic book collectors. There simply isn't enough books to satisfy the demand. The few items we had sold quickly and the want lists have flooded our mail room. *Tales from the Crypt #20* VG $100; *Menace #9* FN $100; *Mask #2* FN $400, *Famous Monsters #2* VF+ $500.

Silver Age - What can we say about Silver Age? The attitude is - If it's not NM, I don't want it. This has forced FN and VF books to be sold at below guide. Those insisting on collecting NM books or nothing, might find collecting coins a more reward-

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ing hobby. *Tales of Suspense* #39 in FN+ $1000; *Tales to Astonish* #27 in VG/FN $750, *Spider-Man* #3 FN+ $800, #4 VF $1200; #6 FN $800, #14 VF+ $1300, #10 VF+ $400; *Space Ghost* #1 VF $150; *Showcase* #7 VG $100; *Flash* #125 VF $120, #126 VF $120, *Conan* #1 NM $180; *Incredible Hulk* #3 GD+ $150

Bronze Age - Still attracting an audience that either has not discovered Silver Age books or simply can't afford them. We feel these books are still under priced in most instances. *Captain Marvel* #1 FN $50; *Tomb of Dracula* #1 NM $75; *Ghost Rider* #1 NM $200, #2 NM $70, #3 NM $60, #5 NM $45; *Thor* #126 VF $90, #127 NM $45. #128 NM $45; *Swamp Thing* #1 NM $50; *House of Secrets* VF $600; *Defenders* #2 NM $30, #2 VG $60, #3 VG $60.

Current - Sales have improved over the last few months as spending has shifted from recent back issues to the onslaught of new titles being released this summer. Malibu has been a pleasant surprise with their Ultraverse, and has already gained an audience. *Hardcase* and *Prime* sold quickly as did *The Strangers* and *The Ferrett*. Continuity is another company that seems to be putting out a quality comic book that is finding their own space in the comic kingdom. Each title has sold quickly as has the Deathwatch 2000 comic cards. This has created an interest in older continuity titles that had been sitting in out bargain bins collecting dust. Image and Valiant are hard at work putting out title after title, and their combined effort Deathmate is highly anticipated as their Prelude sold consistently. There's still an increased demand for both Valiant and Image back issues, as collectors are busily completing their early senes.

DC has found a new home in many collector's hearts as both writing and artwork have improved. Superman and Batman have lured their fans into trying other DC comics with their Battle of the Supermen and Knightfall series. This has caused a respectable rise in sales. Topps has found a winner in Jurassic Park. It flew off the shelves the very first day. The second issue also sold at the same enthusiastic pace and the third issue should do even better. With the movie a hit, this book is beyond belief.

Marvel sales continue to decline, and even solid backers of such favorites as Spider-Man and Venom are now shifting to other titles. The X-Men still sell well and Ren and Stimpy has a solid and growing audience. The Midnight Massacre was a flop, and many of the other titles such as Thor, Captain America, and The Avengers simply are not selling. Disney still has that certain flare and continues to attract an audience.

Dark Horse is a dark horse, and moves slowly. Then there is Defiant. The first release from this newest company is Plasm, who's card sales have been disappointing. This could be due to the lack of folders that were given to our store. Since no one could complete a set without the folder and the card that comes inside, we speculate that collectors decided to spend their money on the Marvel series IV cards.

The distribution problem with the Defiant card folders may make people leery about purchasing future products

The following sales for recent back issues are as follows (all NM); *Rai* #3 $100, #4 $100; *Harbinger* #1 $130, #2 $60; *Hard Corps* #1 (advance) $100; *Spawn* #4 $12; *Venom* gold $100; *Wildcats* gold $180; *Wildstar* gold $50. Well that's it for this month from southern California. Until next time… take care!

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As I write this, the temperature in Manhattan has dropped to 100 degrees (no that's not a typo). Since last week, we've been averaging 101, 102 degree's, with no relief for another week. Aside from affecting highways (which are buckling) and people, it also affects the comic business, since most human beings are sensible enough to know that Superman, Batman, and Spider-Man do not take precedence over trying to not pass out. The heat has caused the store to be devoid of the usual tourists and visitors for the past week. July 4th was extremely busy, since most people apparently did not have enough money to go away. This was the busiest 4th of July week-end in the history of the store, but the following observations are really based on the 3 weeks after writing the last CBM Market Report.

"Where's the new Superman?", "Did the new Batman come in?", that about sums up the new issue scene for now. An occasional "do you have the new X-Men", once in a while "any new Image?". The Malibu and Dark Horse universes die on the counter, even at $1 the Dark Horse issues don't sell. (Have you seen the TV ad which Malibu is running? Two people figuring out how to break into a comic store, in order to beat the crowds??? Wow, guys, that's the kind of ad any dealer would really love… tsk tsk)

Milestone, Heavy Hitters, and British Marvel are display space wasters for us, I've slashed my orders for them by 80%. Trinity is a fine seller, Infinity ad infinitum is not. To be frank, it's not that there are too many books, or companies. In the 40's and 50's, the market supported 100's of new issues, from dozens of companies every month, and I mean major companies; Atlas, Dell, DC, Fiction House, Fawcett, and more… all of whom sold millions each month. The real problems today are the insidious use of gimmicks, and the increase in cover price for much of the material sold. I still think that within the next year or so, unless the purchaser make a stand in what you will and will not buy, that the average cover price will be $2.95. For now, buy what you enjoy and don't get yourself crazy over it. I predict that what's too expensive in cover price for now, will soon be available below cover as hoarders and speculators begin to dump. It's interesting to note that today you can buy back issues from the 70's and 80's in many, many cases for less than new issues cost. This may very well be the first time this has happened. I suggest collectors take advantage of it.

Recent Stuff - Most requested remain *Azrael* (#1 $25, 2-4 $15 each), $60 for the set. Some price resistance to *Vengeance of Bane* at $25, all of the Prologue Batman stuff at Guide. No requests for recent back issues of Marvel. An occasional request (not purchase) about the prices for *Spawn* #1-5 (this primarily from the 12 year old speculators who want to know how much their copies are worth, and are disappointed when prices fall). Most requested Valiant is *X-O Manowar* #1, an easy sell at $35-$40. *X-Men* in the early #200's (#210-#213 at Guide), has been a regular seller. *ASM* #298-299 at Guide, #300 at $75 when I have them. Some interest in *Green Lanterns* in the #180-#200 range, again at Guide. *Jurassic Park* #1 (bagged) $8, *Spectre* #1 (new series) $10.

Cards? Hotter and hotter. Marvel Series IV a rapid seller at $1.50 per pack. Masterworks series at $4 per pack, numbered boxes at $140, Interest in various chase cards has slowed, but individual packs remain a constant seller

I'd like to devote the balance of this report to the question raised by Lee Hester in the last update, regarding how you sell your comics and how dealers purchase them. I've made it a practice in the past 4-5 years to always ask what the seller wants for his/her books. It is rare that I will make an offer. You, as a collector, need to have some idea of what your books are worth, and what you will sell them for (which may not be the same at all). This is your obligation as an informed collector for two reasons; (1) so that you can get a price you can live with, and (2) so that you will be able to sell your books, if the need arises.

If you are a speculator, don't be surprised to be offered 10¢ on the dollar. But let's deal with the collector. I've found there are several personality types who want to sell me their books. The first is the individual who has added up the NM prices in the guide (regardless of the condition of their books), and then is willing to allow me to purchase them for 10% below this figure. They really can't seem to understand when I (politely) refuse. They don't seem to comprehend the idea of daily overhead (rent, electricity, taxes, phone, insurance, etc.) Regrettably, they seem to think I'm trying to "steal" their books.

The second type is the collector who knows what his/her books are worth, but also knows the amount of work, time, and money a dealer has to invest to turn a profit. These collectors are informed; I purchase whatever they have in 80% of the cases.

The third type are those who have come across a collection, and really know nothing about comics. This group is where you find those who are sure that if a comic has 10¢ cover price, it has to be worth many hundreds of dollars, if not many thousands. This group I try to inform and educate. I suggest they buy a Price Guide and read it, paying careful attention to the sections on condition, and how to sell comics. I suggest they go to conventions, or try to advertise. I want them to be informed so they understand the realities of the situation. If the bottom line is that they don't want to do all this work, (which I've been doing for 18 years), I will spend a few moments going over their collection, and I may make them an offer, but more likely I'll suggest they get other offers, and then return to me. The issue in buying comics is that the seller needs to feel comfortable, as far as I'm concerned.

Lee's issue was the area of making an offer for a collection. I use the straight on approach, and try to not play psychological games with this. I don't do free appraisals, and if that is what they want, I'll charge a fee dependent on the value of the comics. When you visit an MD, and you find out you've got a stomach ache, and not cancer, for the 10 minutes this takes, you are charged upwards of $85; but you aren't paying for the 10 minutes, you are paying for years of knowledge and experience.

The same goes for your comic dealer. You are asking him/her to spend time, and utilize his/her experience and knowledge. In many, many cases this is worthwhile, since dealers need books, and the seller needs money. But treat the dealer with some respect, not with the attitude "let's see how many freebie's I can get". I find it both amazing and understandable that the easiest people to both buy from, and to sell to, are other dealers. They know

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the market, what they can pay, how much of a loss they can sustain, and/or the amount of profit they will take. The moral here is that the more informed you are, the easier it is to sell your books. We are all in this together, dealers need customers, customers need dealers. Respect will go a long way on both sides.

End Notes - Just finished reading Vol II of the DC hard cover of All-Star comics. Absolutely wonderful. Magnificently dumb stories, some grand art, and the true feel of what comics were like "back then" If and when a soft cover comes out, treat yourself. Enjoy..

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Welcome once again from the Comic Detectives? Summer sales are definitely picking up, as our customers are spending money with renewed confidence So keep it up, ya crazy knuckle heads, we love ya!

Golden Age - We are very pleased to report that this previously lacking sales area is picking up! EC's are still in demand, even in low grades, though our supplies are dwindling. *Crime Suspenstones* #20, with our favorite EC cover (Johnny Craig, hanging guy) in GD went for a respectable $20. Everyone we speak to agrees that Fawcetts are making a comeback, usually but not always in high grades. We blew out a selection of 16 *Mighty Midgets* and *Fawcett Miniatures* starring Capt. Marvel, Junior, and the rest of the gang, for a bargain, pay-the-bills price of $200, after years of customer indifference towards these little gems. We also traded off one of our long item albatrosses, a *Special Edition* #1 (first all Capt. Marvel book), with a badly decaying interior and a nice, FN looking cover (lovingly restored by Susan Cicconi), for about $860 trade, for an overall group of sharp-looking books. *...Iron Man* #s 1, 2, 3; *X-Men* #4; *Amazing Spider-Man* #10, and an *Action Comics* #28. In the old days, we almost never traded Gold for Silver, but "welcome to the 90's," quoth Babs Bunny

Silver Age - Still going strong overall. We've had bulk sales of low grade *World's Finest Comics* #151, 157, 158, 160, 162, 164, 175, and 181 for a bargain $16.50 the lot. We also sold yet another *Batman Annual* #1 in VF for $175. Trust us - this is one hot book! *Atoms, Hawkmans,* and *Atom & Hawkmans* are strong: we sold *Atom* #7 in GD for $25, #s 24 & 28 in VG for $15; *Hawkman* #5 in VF for $55, #6 in VF+ for $40; and *Atom & Hawkman* #s 41 & 43 in FN+ for $20 the pair. On the Marvel front, we traded a *Tales of Suspense* #39 in VG for $150 cash and $350 in assorted Silver Age trade. A *Tales to Astonish* #45 in FN went for $30, and *Daredevil* #s 34 & 40 in GD went for $8 the pair Finally, we moved a mess of mid-grade Dell *Looney Tunes, Woody Woodpecker, New Funnies,* and *Oswald the Rabbit,* all for a noble $75

Bronze Age - Mostly humor and funny animal titles in this area An 8-inch stack of *Archie* titles, mostly from this era, with a few Silver, ranging in condition from FR to VF+, went for a giddy $60 A group of low grades, *Little Audrey* #12, *Little Lotta* #15, and *Little Dot* #15, sold for $4, $5, and $5 respectively. A humble pair of *Little Lulu* #s 214 & 221 each in FN went for $2 the pair.

Modern Age - An small, eclectic batch, this time around. a *Magnus Robot Fighter* #21 Gold in NM bucked the downward Valiant trend by selling for a studly $40! a NM *Havok & Wolverine* #4 went for a strict-guide $3.50, an *On a Pale Horse* #2 in NM rode in for $5, and yet another *The Ray* #6 in NM went slightly over guide for $3.

Cards & Toys - Sample sales include a *Star Trek. The Wrath of Khan* oversized card set which brought in a bargain $25, a limited edition *Night Court* "Bull" ventriloquist doll was arrested for $60, a 1989 Applause *Batman* Gift bag was practically given away for $1, and a Nordic 1960s *Thor* flasher ring rung out at $10.

Th-th-th-that's all, folks!

GREG WHITE
Comic Books & Collectibles
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Greetings from Walt Disney World. The weather is hot and so are our retail sales. Even though fewer tourists are visiting Central Florida this Summer, we continue to rack up some great weeks. As always our report is based upon store sales and convention activity.

New Books and Recent Back Issues - DC's Knightfall continues to be their best seller Superman interest remains at a higher level than pre death. Most other DC books are slow. Marvels long standing titles still sell well, however, many of their newer offerings are slow movers (Marvel UK books especially!) Valiant and Image have leveled off, and are good but not great sellers. Pleasant surprises have been Dark Horse's *Comic Greatest World* , and Malibu's *Ultraverse*! Hot recent back issues include *Batman* #488, 489; Bane appearances, most pre-unity Valiant books; *Amazing Spidey* #300; *X-Men* #266 and *Superman* #75 bagged Recent sales: *Sword of Azrael* #3 $9.75; *Batman* #488 $15; *Magnus* #12 $95; *X-O Manowar* #1, 2, & 3 $75, *Magnus* #21 Gold $45; *Amazing Spider-Man* #361 $9.

Golden Age - Not much activity since last month. Nothing big has come in and we have only a couple sales to report: *Batman* #62 VG $200; *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories* #7 VG $100; *Dick Tracy BLB* 1940 $35

Silver Age - The most active area of our back issue department. Keys and high grade books are always in demand. We continue to advise our customers to purchase pre 1970 books if they are more interested in speculative value than collecting just for the pure fun of it. Recent purchases include: *Hulk* #1-3, a solid run of *FF* #3-100, a small group of key late 50's-early 60's DC's and many 1960's Marvels. Recent sales include. *Hulk* #3 FN/VF $600, *Fantastic Four* #4 VG/FN $400, *Batman* #145 NM $70; *Challengers of Unknown* #8 FN $100, *Flash* #123 VG $200; *Uncle Scrooge in Disneyland* VG $12; *Captain Action* #1 VF/NM $35; *Superboy* #105 FN $6

Original Art and Toys - Since the majority of our customers are adults, we strive to furnish pre 1970 character related items. Recent sales. Aurora Batmobile, builtup $100; Capt. Action doll, with box $200; Dinky UFO Interceptor $45; Boba Fete in box $275; John Byrne X-Men Original Art $100; Fifteen Hanna-Barbera Flintstones cels with background $750.

That wraps us for this month. Have a great Summer.

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A Word about "Those Sport Card Guys" - As the speculation market continues to fall apart, a lot of people point the bony finger of blame at "those sport card guys". They are supposedly the ones who have ruined the new comics speculation racket. Actually, if you want to know who is to blame for the mess, it's "those comic book guys" who are stock piling cases upon cases of comics, causing comic availability, and price, to fluctuate drastically Let's not blame some alien beings for this quagmire. Comic book guys are not immune to greed and the desire for quick money

Current Age: DC - "Reign of the Supermen" continues to slow, though people are already asking about the August issue of the Superman comic that supposedly features the return on the real Clark Kent. Current installments of "Knightfall" sell briskly, though the number of calls we get for the *Sword of Azrael* mini-series and *Vengeance of Bane* one-shot has dropped It's possible that the sheer number of issues that comprise the "Knightfall" series is starting to wear down some collectors. "When is it going to end?", is something we've started to hear.

Marvel - Overall sales continue to slow, though the new *Sabretooth* #1 produced some impressive sales numbers. Once ultra-hot *Ren & Stimpy* numbers have dropped almost in half; perhaps the fad is dying out.

Image - The slump that I spoke of in the first issue of this publication continues to snowball People who ordered thousands of the early issues and struck it rich while the mania was in full bloom are losing their shirts on the later issues. Since we don't speculate and continue to turn our inventories, we have been able to take advantage of some incredible deals offered by cash strapped speculators Here are some recent deals that I was able to get with no difficulty whatsoever: *Pitt* #1 $1.35; *Maxx* #1 60¢; *Savage Dragon* #3 (coupon) 75¢; *X-Men* #1E 50¢ (I know, I probably got "ripped off" on the *X-Men* #1E deal, but I'm out of them, and the cover price is $3.95 and they fly for that.) As this is written, the "Deathmate" prologue issue has arrived from Image. Twenty-two pages of story (in two chapters) and ten pages of ads plugging future Image and Valiant projects for $2.95. What ever happened to the 32-page comic that was almost all story and art, and cost a dime?

Valiant - The mania continues to cool. We have copies of *Archer and Armstrong* #0, #1 and #2 (second Turok appearance), all prices at $10 each (this is below Overstreet) and they continue to sit on our wall. The same goes for *Eternal Warrior* #1 at $10 and *Magnus Robot Fighter* #1 at $30 (again, below Overstreet). The demand for early Valiants seems satiated The reprint volumes with the extra "bonus" item (such as the *X-O Manowar* reprint with the "X-O Database") are very slow sellers. While collectors may want the "bonus" item for completeness, they nonetheless balk at paying $9.95 to get a twelve-page booklet. *X-O Manowar* #0 finally arrived. Despite its eye catching, wrap-around "chromium" cover, it's not flying off the shelves as quickly as we thought it would.

Defiant - We figured that Malibu's "Ultraverse", Dark Horse's "Comics Greatest World", the "Black

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26-30	$14.50	$16.00	$18.75	$21.00	$29.00	$75.00
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What's Hot and What's Not

Age of Comics" (courtesy of Ania). Continuity's "Deathwatch 2000", the slew of Kirby-esque stuff from Topps, and Now's "Mr. T. and the T-Force" would flop. We thought Jim Shooter's *Plasm* would be the only winner. Our problem - we weren't cynical enough! After four weeks, the Plasm are being shunned. The only thing people seem to want are the Plasm binders. Defiant's decision to ship an allocated 35% of all retailers' orders is hard to comprehend, and the promise of a "second edition binder" isn't helping slumping card sales.

Malibu - Malibu continues to issue what I feel is mediocre product in an attempt to make up for the loss of the Image line. The Image books have had a great deal of perceived quality with many collectors, and even though they are no longer being distributed by Malibu (except for a couple of titles here and there), they still look the same. Malibu has been unable to create perceived quality in their own line of titles. "Ultraverse", their attempt to enter the already bursting-at-the-seams superhero market, generated only a lukewarm reception. Even their "gimmicks" (a comic with a "bullet hole" through it, or cut in the shape of the hero's head) seem less than noteworthy.

Dark Horse - Here is a company that has created perceived value in many cases, and all of this has been done outside of the traditional (i.e. Marvel) superhero format. Their licensed comics (Aliens, Predator, Star Wars) have all done well, both in terms of new comic and back issue sales. I feel their attempt to imitate the mainstream superhero titles (through their "Comics Greatest World") at this juncture will likely be proved to be ill timed and ill advised. The "Arcadia" books (X, Pitt Bulls, and Ghost) have just come out, and even though sales were better than those of Malibu's "Ultraverse" comics, they sold only as well as the mid-range Marvel superhero books. Dark Horse is a unique company that I personally hate to see trying to imitate the others.

Now Comics - Now Comics seems to be banking heavily on the personality of former star, Mr. T. Their other comics, including the once hot "Married With Children", have loyal but small followings. Despite all the hype, we ordered ten copies of the number one issue and sold only six. Believe me, we displayed them well and didn't try and prevent people from buying them. Despite the Neal Adams art, there is little demand for this product here.

Ania - Apparently headed by a character with the moniker of Dark Zulu, Ania has been mounting an "in your face" campaign for over a year now. Despite the continued barrage of shrill attempts to get our attention, I feel they have produced nothing of real quality. Retailers just won't be bullied into ordering substandard books from anyone. Sorry guys.

Continuity - Continuity has been around almost since the beginning of the direct market with highly respected, incredibly talented Neal Adams at the helm. Unfortunately, despite Mr. Adams' undeniable talents, he has never been able to fully capitalize on the opportunities in the marketplace; the vast majority of Continuity's titles simply do not ship on any sort of reliable schedule that I can see. I wouldn't spend too much money betting that this pattern will change.

Topps - The Kirby-esque stuff from Topps is not selling well, and we expect to see further drops in sales as future issues arrive. The lack of true Kirby art is leaving many die-hard fans in our area feeling somewhat cheated.

Silver Age: Marvel - There has been little change in the desirability of Silver Age Marvels. I have noticed a slight drop off in the number of high grade, key Marvels that are being offered for sale to my store. As collectors watch the new comics speculation market collapse, they seem to be holding on to key Marvels as their one sound investment.

DC - Ditto for key DC Silver Age books. Demand for Silver Age Batman and Detective books, high after both the Batman movies, has slowed down to a demand for high grade, key issues. Early *Green Lantern, Justice League of America, Showcase,* and even some of the more off-beat titles such as *Metal Men* and *Doom Patrol* have their following.

Gold Key - *Star Trek, Dark Shadows,* and other television tie-ins continue to be sought after, though high grade early issues seem to be what everyone wants.

Restoration Note - I would like to expound on the issue of restoration that I touched on in my last report. Please note that these comments are directed specifically towards dealers having comics restored in order to increase their selling price, a practice I am strongly opposed to for the following reasons—

1. The dealer ends up spending his money on this service, and he must pass this expense on to the consumer. The result is a comic that is cosmetically more attractive and costs much more. I suggest that instead of investing in restorations, the dealer could invest in more collections.

2. Contrary to what has been stated by others in this forum, my personal experience is that the majority of buyers are turned off by restorations.

3. Even if the dealer carefully discloses the extent of the work that has been done, the customer must still take this on faith. They still cannot actually see what the previous grade was, or what the book looked like before it was restored. Buyers of rare material are very easily turned off by what the rest of us might consider relatively minor points. If there is the slightest reason not to buy a particular book, they almost certainly will not. I've found restoration is one of the surest ways to turn off our buyers.

4. Collectors are fully aware that there are some unscrupulous dealers who do not disclose the fact that repairs have been made on a book. Since old books can change hands frequently, often dealer to dealer, the exact details of each restoration can become "cloudy", either by accident or by design. Since it may be impossible to detect the extent of the restorations, I advise the prudent consumer to pass on a "suspicious" book in favor of an untouched one.

Now some of you may be saying to yourself, "Lee, you dunderhead. What about the inevitable deterioration of all comic books into heaps of dust? If we don't preserve them there won't be any left!"

This is absolutely true. That is why I definitely recommend professional restoration for a collector's most treasured comics, when needed. I feel these should be books that the collector intends on keeping forever. The restorations should be of the type that help reverse, as much as possible, the aging process.

EC - We recently acquired two small runs of EC books. Among them were several nice issues of *War Against Crime,* including a copy of issue #1 in VF. Needless to say, they are all gone. Also acquired, and sold, were *Weird Fantasy* and *Weird Science* with Frazetta and Wood covers, *Haunt of Fear* and *Tales From the Crypt* with Jack Davis covers. Even "lower grade" copies, in GD and priced around $10, fly off our wall. I've noticed that EC collectors tend not to be "mint freaks" and will often buy lower grade copies if graded and priced accurately, the joy for this group seems to be in owning and reading as many EC's as possible, rather than in owning the most perfect copy available.

DC - Still very much in demand. A GD copy of *Batman* #17 sold the day after we got it.

Dell - The same time we got the EC books, we also acquired some *Four Color, Pogo Parade, Uncle Scrooge,* and *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories;* some sold before we could even get them onto the wall! Carl Barks issues are still at the top of the list for many collectors.

In Conclusion - I hope that we all had fun at San Diego. Hopefully, lots of cool, old comics changed hands and we all got to meet our favorite friends and artists. Turn your friends and neighbors on to the joys of comics reading!

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Hi, We're back again this month from Virginia. The weather has been extremely hottt. The temperatures are in the high 90's to 100 degrees. Comic sales were a little slow during the month of June, but July has shown a marked improvement.

The *X-O* "0" cover was the best looking cover that I have ever seen on a comic book. Our copies were quickly sold out at our three locations as well as the other area shops.

Plasm "0" binders.. what else can I say about them except super hott!! Just the thought of this subject, I'm sure brings on a headache for all dealers. Pre-order interest was very poor—as was the reception of the binders by our customers. We had a hard time selling them the first day, however, by the second day it became clear that everyone in the world wanted a binder. Rumors were that the binders were going for as much as $150 each.

Golden Age - Although we do very little Golden Age business, we did get a $140 sale for a *Sub-Mariner* #10 in VG.

Silver Age - *Hulk* #6 in VG sold for $190. Interest in early *X-Men* and *Amazing Spider-Man* in VG or FN continues to be hot. Most Silver Age books in the under $40 price range are also selling well.

Back issues of *Superman* and *Batman* are beginning to pick up as their story lines are coming to a conclusion.

Modern Age - DC has hopped on the special covers band wagon along with the other companies. However, their covers have not sold as well as Marvel or Valiant special cover books.

Superman is still hot with the conclusion of this storyline that began last year with the Death of Superman storyline. Theories of who the real Superman may be are still being debated by our customers.

Batman Knightfall series is selling out within the first or second day; 497 was gone faster than the Flash can run.

The first ongoing Robin (series I) is highly anticipated by fans, but some retailers are remembering the last Robin mini-series: those movable covers that didn't quite make that series move off the shelves. Retailers here are being cautious.

Milestone issues are slowing down. The only one that still sells reasonably well is the Hardware book.

Catwoman was a very successful book for us and

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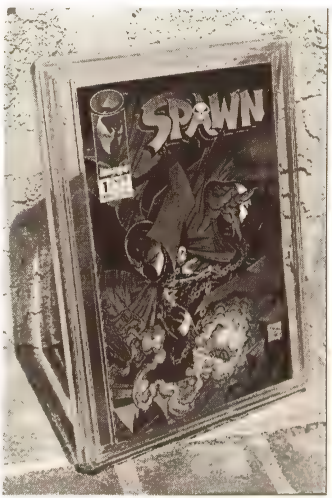

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What's Hot and What's Not

sold out after the second day at all our stores. Remarks that we heard from our customers were: "good art, great cover, good story." Our concern is how well the interest will hold once the Bane storyline is over

Marvel - Venom is still very hot; the Maximum Carnage series was a super hit for Marvel. Any back issues that we are able to pick up are being sold almost as fast as we can find them.

X-titles are still our best seller, with *X-Men* selling the most.

Magneto "0" upcoming storyline is beginning to pick up interest as we are starting to pre-sell this set of books. It looks like another winner from Marvel - and about time too!

The UK titles appear dead. They just don't sell anymore. We have less than 1% of our pullers choosing any of these books. they need to be shipped back to the UK.

Wolverine is also selling well for us, including back issues.

Image - Interest has cooled on many of their titles, except for *Spawn*, *Wildcats*, and *Youngblood* issues. Poor scheduling could still be the problem, plus poor back issue prices for many of their titles. I feel that these are areas that Todd and company must solve as soon as possible. Point in fact: the Deathmate Pro-log issue that we felt would fly off the shelves met some resistance from our customers. One of the reasons that we heard was the meager number of pages in the book. This resistance makes us wonder if this cross-over will be hot or a bust.

Valiant - Interest on new issues have stabilized and except for some key issues (those that will increase in value quickly) the interest has not been as intense as it was a few months ago.

Pre-Unity issues that once flew off the shelves are taking a while longer to sell. Also, more pre-unity issues are beginning to show up for sale by our customers.

Independents - Dark Horse — Comics Greatest World, the $1 sixteen issue series which introduces another new universe, has been selling well for us. The stories are well written, the art is good and the price is great. We feel that these books could be a potential hit for Dark Horse once the fans catch onto the story. These could be a sleeper, especially if they can bring in some well known artists to work on the books.

Last issue I closed with a promise that my partner George Pesquera was going to comment on a situation that could damage our industry. It is my pleasure to turn this over to him, so see you all next issue

Editorial Comment - Hi, I wanted a chance to talk to you about a situation that I feel could hurt our industry in the very near future. *Batman* #497 was selling very briskly at our store and at many of the stores in our area. Unfortunately, once again some dealers were selling the book at $3 the same day that it came out. It sold for $5 that very weekend. We had it on our shelves for 2 weeks for cover price before we finally sold out (we re-ordered). I really hope that the consumer will become more educated and will begin to shop around before allowing yourself to pay like that. It may be a hot book at the moment, but it will eventually stabilize and one should be able to purchase it at a more reasonable price. It's fun to collect, read, and enjoy your books…it's not very much fun to be taken advantage of.

One last subject is the case of polybags. Polybags were meant to be opened and the book was meant to be read. Yes, read your book: it is not a sin. You can enjoy the book, have fun with your hobby and still have a good investment if it goes up in price in the future. Thanks for reading and see you all next month.

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Lomita, CA 90717
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Hi, yi, yi all you investing, comic collecting maniacs out there in toy land.

Soap Box: Hey, Dr. Tim, do you have (by any chance) a NM/MT copy of *Showcase* #22 or #17 or #4 or #8 or whatever? My reply, a resounding no, no a thousand times no and if I did, fella: have you ever heard of **fourple** guide - cause, that's how much I'm gonna charge. So, get a clue out there investment-o-holics, there just ain't no such animal as NM/MT on the market now days. I wish there was.

Now onward and upward…

Golden Age - Timely/DC Someone help me or throw me a life line so I can get out of the Timely/DC mire. Folks, believe me when I tell you there are other books out there that weren't published by either DC or Timely - really, no kiddin'. There's, let me see, Fawcetts, Quality, Dell, Fiction House, EC, Avon, Standard and…well, you get the idea. These publishers put out fine books I think were equal and even better (in some cases) than DC or Timely. So please, do yourself and the hobby a big favor and discover some of these gems (and they won't even cost you your life savings). Nuff said!

Some Sales - *Crime Suspense Stories* #22 FN+ $200; *Mone Fun* #67 VF $500; *Batman* #14 (rest) VF $475; *Black Terror* #1 VG+ $175; *Jumbo* #9 VG+ $400; *Mask* #1 FN $350.

Silver Age - To say the Silver market is totally nutz (as in unpredictable and often infuriating), is putting it mildly. 40,000 dollars for any Silver Age books seems goofy to me. Who the heck is the fella who can dip into his pocket and pull out that kind of dough for an *Amazing Fantasy* #15? He's either got Silver Age fever or knows something about that book that I don't!

Believe me folks, I love my Overstreet Publications - they truly are indispensable for the serious collector/investor. But for really high grade key copies, just multiply the far right hand price by two or three and sometimes four, for an accurate dealer price. I see no end in sight for rising (even obscene) prices for high grade keys.

Some More Sales - *Showcase* #43 VF+ $400; *Hawkman* #1 VF/NM $500; *Amazing Fantasy* #15 VF $8500 (a bargain I guess); *Fantastic Four* #1 VF/NM $8500 (another bargain), *Spider-Man* #1 VF with chipping (lots of chipping) $4500, *Showcase* #17 VG $475

That's it kids. Sorry I haven't written for a while, but the nice folks at the vet wouldn't let me out until the foaming stopped - later! And thank you Rob Hughes for all the help.

RICH CONLEY
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"Cheers!" from South Texas. I am busy writing this report from my new office in our ninth and newest store (a 6,000 sq. ft monster) at 914 Pat Booker Road in Universal City, TX. Please stop by, this is the first time in the past three years that I have actually been officing in one of our stores and not in our office/warehouse, and I'm anxious to get back to eyeball-to-eyeball communication with serious comic fans. Here's what else has been happening in the past month…

Golden Age - Continuing the trend we stated in *OCBM* #4, Golden Age books have been far harder to acquire (at prices that give us reasonable margins) than to sell. However, we were pleased to buy a small collection of high grade second and third tier titles which included such books as: *Air Fighters* V2 #1; *Big Shot* #18, *Blue Ribbon Comics* #13-19, *Champ Comics* #21; *Fight Comics* #19-20; *Pep Comics* #20; *Prize Comics* #14-22; *Thrilling Comics* #30, *Victory Comics* #3; and the *Mile High Copy of Wings* #40. We paid almost 75% of *OPG* #23, but expect these to sell almost as quickly as we can get them cataloged and advertised.

Recent Sales - *Batman* #58 FN $230; *Superman* #48 VF $250; *Laugh Comics* #21 FN/VF $100; *Captain Marvel Jr.* #9 FN $150; *All Star* #23 FN- $325; *Jumbo Comics* #41 VF $120; and *USA Comics* #17 VG $100. Solid VG-shape books in original/unrestored condition sell as quickly as VF or better copies. My advice on Golden Age material is to pick up all of it you can afford (if priced fairly). I would gladly trade my *Harbinger #1*s for the $100-$120 books, above, and that is what we're seeing a lot of collectors doing.

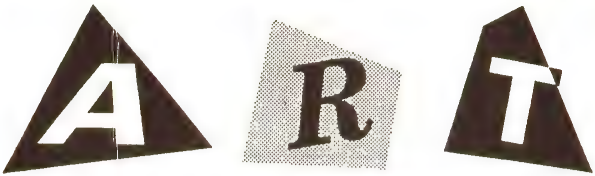
Pre-Silver Age - Since last report, we have been deluged with calls for pre-Silver Age books. Unfortunately, we have been largely unable to fill any of the demand. In highest demand are the reappearance's of *Captain America*, *Human Torch*, and *Sub-Mariner* under the Atlas label. Next in demand are the scarce issues of *World's Finest*, *Action*, and *Superman*. It would also be unfair not to mention the monster/horror/terror issues which sell very well at shows and in our stores where collectors can see the great cover art.

Pre-hero Atlas titles such as *Amazing Adventures*, *Journey into Mystery*, *Tales to Astonish*, and *Strange Tales* continue to rise in popularity. Many collectors are realizing the relative scarcity of these books when compared to their hero successors, and from a price perspective, they tend to be far less expensive as well.

Recent Sales - *Amazing Adventure* #2 VF $225; *Amazing Adult Fantasy* #8 VG $50; *Strange Tales* #50 VF $50; *Tales of Suspense* #16 VF- $100; and *Tales to Astonish* #2 FN $120.

Silver Age - #1s and minor keys remain at hot as ever. High grade copies sell much faster than mid-grade issues, but low grade keys are very fast movers! Our want list database contains many collectors who want GD/VG copies of such issues as *Tales to Astonish* #27, *Strange Tales* #110; *Showcase* #4 & 6; and *Adventure* #247

Sales Include - *Fantastic Four* #5 VF $995; *Fantastic Four* #48 VF- $225; *Justice League of America* #21 VF/NM $175; *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 VG- $1,500; *Showcase* #23 FN $300, *Brave & Bold* #30 FN- $300, and *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 NM $950. While these key issues generally brought Guide to above-Guide prices, sales of non-key issues often required negotiations (such as part-trade or cash discounts). Regardless of the need to make some price concessions, acquisition of Silver Age comics is becoming increasingly difficult



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What's Hot and What's Not

Post-Silver Age - Demand seems to have stabilized here, with only a few issues regularly appearing on customer want lists. There are: *Savage Tales & Savage Sword of Conan* #1, *Kamandi* #1, and *Jonah Hex* #1. There is a lot of price resistance to such books as *Astonishing Tales* #25 and *Iron Man* #55, while *Marvel Spotlight* #5 sells quickly at *OCBM* Guide. Our ability to acquire replacement stock from this era remains about equal to our ability to resell it.

Modern Age - Valiant and Image books are on a serious decline, with DC titles picking up (especially if they include Batman or Superman tie-ins). Sales levels of most Marvel titles are holding constant, with the gimmicky covers being hit a bit hard because of the excessive exploitation of high-quality covers with low-quality storyline. Infinity Crusade, the endless story, is a dead storyline. Maximum Carnage, on the other hand is a stellar success! Knightfall is red-hot, and Reign of the Supermen is still a great seller. Continuity has captured a small market share as has Malibu with the Ultraverse. Defiant is going to have trouble as all of our customers are livid about the Plasm Card & Binder shortage/allocation situation.

Recent Sales - *Batman* #492 $15, *Vengeance of Bane* $25; *Vampirella* #1 $15; *Dracula* #1 (direct) $9.[have a buyer for the red foil at $100.]; *Ren & Stimpy* #1 (direct) $25; and *Jurassic Park* #1 (direct) $7. Other fast-moving recent books at above Guide prices are *Spider-Man* #300, 344-5, 361; *Sandman* #1 & 8; *Star Wars: Dark Empire* #2 & 3; *Superman* #75 (1st prints), and *X-Men* #266.

Cards - Marvel IV cards have become a staple, selling well at $1.25 per pack, with the Spider vs. Venom Hologram already commanding a $50 price tag! Star Wars Galaxy has slowed a bit since Marvel IV hit, but the etched foil chase cards have been a high demand item at $15. The all-prism cards (Divia-II, Silver Surfer) have gone ice-cold, as have most of the prism chase cards from the other Comic Images sets. The one exception is the Spider-Man I prism cards which sell well at $20 each.

Deathwatch cards are appropriately titled! They're hard to give away! Plasm cards are also dying, primarily because of the binder shortage. Jurassic Park Gold Cards are a bright spot, with the flicker-holograms bringing $10 a piece.

Older (pre 70's) non-sports cards remain as hot as ever, with replacements even harder to find. We picked up a collection of non-sports sets which included Robin Hood, Davy Crockett (orange), Zorro, Bat-Laffs, Civil War News, as well as some off-beat stuff such as Mr. Foney's Funnies. As of this writing, most of these sets have already been sold.

Anticipation still runs high for the Upper Deck Valiant series. I hope they ship before the interest declines.

See you next month!

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Comics On Cable - Since I just signed on as an Overstreet Advisor and this is my first Market report, I want to say "Hello!" to everyone and welcome them to Oblivion. Oblivion is a state of mind, and also the name of the cable access television show that I produce here in Louisiana. In addition to other entertainment news stories about TV, movies, music, and games, each episode features a segment about the comic book industry.

The reason I'm writing about this now is to let you know that a similar project could work in your favor as well. Many local cable companies across the country are interested in producing cable access programs of local orgination.

Another avenue to consider to boost awareness of comics (and create new customers) in your area is the use of computer bulletin boards. For example, our show is supported by Oblivion Net, which users can log-on to and read bulletins about comics or leave messages to other comics fans. Not only is something like Project Oblivon a lot of fun, but it increases your visibility in your area.

Silver Age - I am talking here more to people who are not into collecting Silver Age books than to those who are. My enjoyment of comics has always been derived from the stories they contain, not their potential investment value, so I am not one to push "hot" books on people. I prefer suggesting titles to customers whose tastes I am familiar with. However, as a retailer I believe that I also have a responsibility to my customers who are primarily investors and who look to me to make sure their investment dollars are well spent. And what I've noticed is that there are a lot of investors getting into comics and buying new issues because they've seen the high price tags on the Silver Age books, not understanding that the days of the thousand dollar comic book are over. Nothing being printed now will ever reach those levels, and a quick check of the price guide will show that few current comics even reach the $100 mark. New collectors should be made aware of this. It may seem obvious to you that the real monetary potential for investment lies in the Silver Age market, but seasoned collectors still shouldn't hesitate to share that fact with collectors who have less experience. Or better yet, teach them that comics are intended to be read and enjoyed.

Bagged Comics - I am not a proponent of bagged comics because a comic book sealed in a polybag is less likely to be read than one that isn't so polybagging a comic rather defeats the original purpose of its publication. Besides, the gimmicks have been wearing thin with the buyers for a long, long time now. But since I can't deny that these bagged comics do exist, I feel the need to make a common sense statement about them: If a book that has been removed from its polybag still has all of its "extras" with it (cards, posters, etc.), and both the book and its extras are in mint condition, then that book is still in mint. If the book is missing the extras, then grade it downward accordingly; the precedent for that has already been set, such as with the Image books that originally contained coupons. But please, don't insist that a book must still be sealed in the bag for it to be mint. It's silly, and it encourages buyers to stash their comics away unread. The future of the comics industry lies with good stories and loyal readers.

Dark Horse - Of all the new universes that have sprung up so far this summer, we've gotten the best response from *Comic's Greatest World*. I have to commend the $1 price tag. It doesn't take much prodding to get a customer to shell out just one more dollar for such a slick-looking book, and maybe even more importantly in this new summer glut, the cheap price allowed retailers to stock it in large quantities without going bankrupt. I'm also especially pleased that Dark Horse is continually acquiring the licenses for my favorite books that are or were stuck in comics limbo, such as Grendel and Nexus. These new books help me expose customers to the quality stories contained in the original series that often go ignored in the back issue bins. I'm happy to hear the Mage II and Badger are supposed to be on the way as well. My only suggestion to Dark Horse is "Hey, has everyone forgotten about Grendel?"

DC - The majority of the Vertigo line still deserves praise. I would, however, have an easier time attracting new readers to the books if they would put more of the earlier issues in Trade Paper Backs (TPBs). It's time for new volumes of *Hellblazer, Doom Patrol, Animal Man,* and *Swamp Thing*, and there is yet to be a single paperback of Shade, the Changing Man. Retailers could sell loads of these and increase the circulation of the current Vertigo titles in the process. Knightfall and Reign of the Supermen are still continual sell-outs, and it's not like we didn't anticipate additional demand for the storylines when we ordered them.

Image/Valiant - Sales on Image books are still in a decline. Valiant sales seem to have leveled out, though the demand for the early issues isn't what it used to be. I dearly hope that initial sales on the Deathmate Prologue aren't an indicator for the rest of the series, because the book isn't moving.

Defiant - I decline giving my gut reaction on the Plasm #0 Binder Fiasco since Shooter and the River Group are still pointing fingers at each other and I'm not sure where to place the blame. Judging by the feedback I'm getting from other retailers, I'm worried that Defiant may be in for a less than friendly reception to the Dark Dominion binders. Some of the actual Defiant comics look promising, but this is a rough start for a company who promises us good stories and no gimmicks.

Marvel - First the good news: the X-Books are still the big sellers, and many of the midline titles are still performing consistently. Now my pet peeves. The Heavy Hitters, a stillborn product line if there ever was one, and the endless special covers that they don't even attempt to justify anymore. Marvel needs to realize that the higher price tags that accompany these random "special" issues are eroding the readership of their titles. Comics fans do have a finite budget, after all. And judging by sales, I think this whole UK thing is an experiment gone bad, so I am less than enthused about the potential of the Marvel Frontier line.

Independents - I can't finish my first Overstreet Market Report without praising my favorite comic of all time, *Cerebus*. The epic story that creator/writer/artist Dave Sim spins is true literature and truly wonderful. Fellow retailers should keep an ample supply of the phone books on hand; this is quality stuff. Other books that I feel deserve notice (and shelf space) include *Hepcats* by Martin Wagner, *Bone* by Jeff Smith, *A Distant Soil* by Colleen Doran, *Starchild* by James Owens, and *Milk & Cheese* by Evan Dorkin. These are truly talented, self-published creators whom I always seek out at conventions (they've gotta be tired of me by now) instead of the "hot" writers and artists, because these are the dedicated souls who truly care about comics and who are in this industry for the long haul.

As for the collectability of the comics, these are series that had early issues with small print runs. Therefore these quality independents have an advantage over the glut of books put out by larger publishers in that (a) the early issues really are rare collectibles with intrinsic value for the fans, and (b) the readership base consists of loyal followers who

To: COMIC READERS EVERYWHERE

We at ARComics would like to thank each and every one of you comic readers who have made ARCOMICS PREMIERE, the ARCosmos, the various ARCards, and all of the ARComics promotions such a success. We must, however, apologize to those of you who have been unable to get ARCOMICS PREMIERE. Thanks for letting us know, both by using the ARComics Readers' Correspondence Box and the ARComics Readers' Comment Line. We appreciate your input.

Here is how to get ARCOMICS PREMIERE and ARComics Readers' Choice. Both comics are still available through the normal order process at your favorite comic shop. Simply tell your comic retailer to order through Capital City, Diamond, Friendly Franks, or Heroes World, all of whom have assured us that they will honor all orders for ARComics. Should your comic retailer not be associated with these distribution networks, your might suggest Comics on Call, 1-800-654-HERO. ARComics Readers' Choice will ship in September, but ARCOMICS PREMIERE is available now.

ARComics Readers' Choice will feature Aegis, with the story by Terrance Henry, art by Ralph Lumley, and cover art by Angel Medina. The cover will again be special, this time featuring three color neon glow-in-the-dark effect. We are really looking forward to seeing this cover.

The ARComics Readers' Comment Line is still open at 1-900-454-COMIC for your comments, and we have new questions this month. There is a lot more coming from ARComics, but for now, if you haven't gotten your orders in, order now! We appreciate your support. ARComics are YOUR comics.

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aren't fickle or likely to wander off, meaning that the readership won't erode over time. Which means customers who are also in this for the long haul.

I'll keep you posted on the success of the Oblivion show. Remember, we all can do our part to see that comics get the recognition that a legitimate art form deserves, and at this stage the best method is education. Spread the word.

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Being a small comic retailer, we are often asked how well we are surviving the current product glut. We are managing, but it's difficult to resist ordering the big numbers of whatever comic title just to get the special goody from the publisher. We constantly remind ourselves to order no more than we think we can sell, and to not be afraid to sell out of a comic. We manage to score brownie points with our customers by sending them, of all places, to some of our classier competitors (it scores points for our traveling comic book road show with the local shops, and who can't use a little more good will?)

DC - Would anyone be surprised to hear that the Superman titles are doing well? Everyone is waiting for the original, true Superman to return to action (so to speak). In light of the resurrection, the Doomsday and Funeral for a Friend issues are beginning to level off in sales. Between the spare copies being dumped into the local market and the trade paperbacks, this area is reaching full saturation in terms of supply. *Adventures of Superman* #500 still moves, but not at any inflated prices. Truth to tell, we've heard reports of some retailers selling their excess at 75% of cover price to reduce their overstock. Also, a lot of fans aren't truly counting this issue as Kal El's real resurrection (but they might later credit *Action Comics* #687 where the Last Son of Krypton finds the Corpse of Steel). But we will have to wait until the end of the Reign of the Supermen to see how many speculators stick around as readers, won't we?

Knightfall brings eager fans to our stand every week to see how Azrael fares as the new Batman. Unfortunately, sales on Legends of the Dark Knight and Shadow of the Bat are currently in a slump as the "specu-leeches" (a belated thanks to Debbie David for this wonderful term) use their spare coinage to buy (and hoard) extra Bat-copies of Knightfall for their early Bat-retirement.

After a couple of months of nobody even looking at them, the Milestone titles are finally finding their audience with minority buyers. And older readers appreciate seeing *Wonder Woman*, *Green Lantern*, and *Justice League of America* still on sale. Our younger customers take easily to *Batman Adventures* while more mature connoisseurs enjoy the Ostrander/Mandrake *Spectre* (one of DC's most underrated titles in terms of story and art) and *Sandman* as well as the *Star Trek*, and *Star Trek. The Next Generation* titles. DC does more than any other publisher to help us reach out to someone outside of the core teenage, white male audience.

Marvel - Does anyone not sell a lot of the Mutant titles? Despite its lateness, *Cable* sells great! The recent first issue from the Deadpool and Sabretooth mini-series are total sell-outs. *X-Factor* sales picked up slightly with issue ninety-two, in no small part to Joe Quesada's great art and the magnificent Havok hologram on the cover. We feel *X-Men Adventures'* sales will pick up again when the Fox Network begins showing new episodes this fall.

Interest in the *Avengers* and *X-Men* anniversaries is building while the Spider-books and Venom mini-series are enjoying strong sales in new and back issues (even though most of our customers are grateful that the pointless "Maximum Carnage" series is over). Although *Ghost Rider* is not longer selling like it did even six months ago, the rest of Marvel's horror line is gaining steam, especially *Morbius*. Thinking that this will be the next "Knightfall", fans are snapping up the current *Daredevils*. Other titles that pick up sales steam with every issue are *Silver Sable* and *Iron Man*. Meanwhile, *Deathlok*, *Sleepwalker*, and *Darkhawk* are losing readers from one month to the next.

The *2099* Universe is still hot, especially the Spider-Man book. Interest in *X-Men 2099* is unbelievable!

Valiant - Except for the pre-Unity issues, almost all of the Valiant line is being dumped onto the market by local specu-leeches. However, the quality of the early Valiant titles keeps the demand and prices high on the first four or five *Solars*, *Harbingers*, *Shadowman*, *X-O Manowars*, and *Magnus*. Locally, *Turok*, *Dinosaur Hunter* is not only hot, but volcanic!

Image - *Shaman's Tears* sells out as fast as we can restock, as does *Spawn*, not to mention the titles being packaged by Homage and Extreme Studios. While *Shadowhawk* features a new cover gimmick with almost every issue, our customers tell us that it's the character that brings them back each time, not the investment potential. Don't we all need more clients like this?

Independents - The tragic death of Brandon Lee has increased the interest in *The Crow. Cry For Dawn* is gaining in demand due to the off-beat horror stories and the exquisite art of Joseph Liner. The Malibu Ultraverse and Dark Horse's Comics Greatest World started out slowly but are starting to earn their places in our inventory.

In closing, do you want to trick. .er, convince the speculators to read their polybagged books? Ask them how they can anticipate trends if they don't know what features to find in a book that makes them valuable to other collectors. The only way they'll find out is to (are you taking notes?) read their comic book purchases! In time, they could become readers, not just collectibles gamblers - and readers are far more loyal to us than the speculators who will drop out of our hobby when they face the frustration of trying to sell their booty at an obscene profit to dealers who are already overstocked with the same merchandise. Those hoarded books will be simply dumped into the market, driving the resale prices down and critically wounding the market. Just ask the baseball trading card collectors if this can happen!

So stay cool, stay dry, take care and be good!

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(313) 886-2260

And then there were six: 1 DC and Marvel 2 Valiant and Image 3. Dark Horse and Malibu? Read on. .

And so it goes that this Summer's four-letter word of choice happens to be "glut". Standing in the middle of my store between two walls of new product I almost have to shake my head in dismay. Does the industry really need all this stuff? Can excess get any more wretched than this? Perhaps, but if it does, I'm not looking forward to it. I think we're looking at a turning point in the history of comics, where biggest isn't necessarily best, where a rethinking and restructuring isn't just mandatory, it's crucial! And where cutting away the fat and downsizing is an inevitability!

Marvel - Stan's baby is starting to look a bit stodgy these days. *The Punisher* still seems to attract attention from a few diehard readers, but *Ghost Rider* has stalled, both recent and back issues, and needs a serious kick start to make his way back into the limelight. The most recent spate of first issues, *Deadpool*, *Night Thrasher*, and *Sabretooth*, all sold respectably and well, and the Maximum Carnage storyline has retained the buyer's interest from first issue to last. X-books continue to hold their own, and it appears we have Marvel jumping onto the zero issue bandwagon, with *Magneto* #0 soon to appear on the horizon. You know the upstarts must be doing something right when Marvel belatedly adopts one of their purchasing incentives.

DC - Interest in Batman's Knightfall saga still remains hot and heavy. *Knightfall* #11 sold out within 24 hours, and a reorder of 25 additional copies again sold out within 24 hours, this time at $4 a piece. Look for momentum to build as *Batman* #500 nears its release, and Azrael steps into the picture with a new and enhanced set of Bat-duds. The Reign of Supermen storyline is also due to peak soon with the imminent return of the Genuine Article. From a retailer's standpoint things should get real interesting very soon.

Valiant - Now let's be honest. In recent months Valiant's books have showcased some cover art that is not the best I've ever seen. This could at least be part of the reason why sales have been falling so drastically for this once highly-touted newcomer. For the most part their writing still remains strong, but if they want to seriously compete with Image and the others they're going to have to inject more visual pizzazz into their books, even if it means shopping around for more new talent (with strong emphasis on the word "talent"). *X-O Manowar* #0 and the X-O trade paperback were by far the most successful Valiant releases during the month of June, even though "X-O Month" took place in May. And speaking of making promises that they can't deliver, that brings us to…

Image - Eye candy. These two words best describe for me what Image is all about. This may be why they have the upper hand over Valiant in terms of sales, most certainly in this store. Now the older reader may argue that Valiant's books are more well-written, with a solid and cohesive Universe as its foundation, but hey, if that was all that truly mattered then why not put out paperbacks and dispense with visuals altogether? These are things that matter to me too, but let's face it, all you Image-bashing curmudgeons out there: Eye candy sells comics. Unfortunate, but true.

Malibu and Dark Horse - So here's the real news of the Summer, Super-deaths and broken Bat-backs aside. These two companies have been around long enough to where they've had plenty of time to cultivate savvy, and savvy they are. For Malibu, it's the Ultraverse #0, with its five-coupon incentive. A lot of people, dealers, retailers, say they hate this stuff, as if it's beneath them, but for Malibu, it's working. Kids are hustling for the coupons and reading the comics. As for Dark Horse, pricing their weekly

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Comics Greatest World books at a buck a pop makes them enticingly affordable to the younger reader who may not be able to afford this week's $5 graphic novel. These books are indeed taking away sales from the other companies, and the level of quality is high enough to where it may well continue that way. Time may prove me wrong, but I say look for these two lines of superhero books to become movers and shakers in the months to come. And for Malibu to have signed on Barry Windsor-Smith to lend his considerable talents to one of their projects, now that's a coup. Can't wait.

Not much else to report except to say that Ren & Stimpy still sell exceedingly well, God bless their whacked-out little cartoon souls. Marvel's darn lucky to have 'em. They're like Warner Brothers characters reincarnated as Garbage Pail Kids. I've talked to parents who find them appalling, but the children of these same parents become visibly elated at the mere mention of their names. "Nose Goblins!" What a hoot.

BRUCE EDWARDS
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Hello and welcome back to another Overstreet Market Report from the Bluegrass State. We were just down in Atlanta for the Atlanta Fantasy Fair and noticed an interesting range of activity. The Fantasy Fair is a three day show and we did more business on Sunday than on Friday and Saturday combined! It seems that collectors were saving on the admission fee and coming in spending that extra $20 or so on Sunday.

We had many requests for Gold Key TV related issues. Esoteric comics from the 1950's sold well. Valiants started off slow but sold well for us. Marvels, DC's, and Independents all sold moderately well. Many want lists were in evidence as collectors tried to fill holes in their collections. Now, on to some prices realized:

Marvels - *Amazing Fantasy* #15 FR/GD $570; *Daredevil* #183 VF/NM $8, *Ren & Stimpy* #1 1st printing $17; *Marvel Team-Up* #2 FN $17; as well as numerous recent and common issues of *X-Men, Spectacular Spider-Man, Avengers, Daredevil, Marvel Team-Up, Amazing Spider-Man, Defenders*, etc. at $1 each. This price was generally cheap by the Guide but was reasonable considering the glut of common material on the market.

Esoteric/Golden Age - *Fatman the Human Flying Saucer* #1 FN/VF $20, #2 almost FN $10, #3 GD $7; *Yogi* #11 VG/FN $7; *Weird Thrillers* #1 GD/VG $22; *Thrill-O-Rama* #1 VG/FN $2.50; *Dick Tracy* #6 GD $10, *Dick Tracy Popped Wheat Give-away* NM $6; *Mysteries of Unexplored Worlds* #8 VG/FN, coupon out back cover $13; *E-Man* #1 (Charlton) VF/NM $9.50. We sold several Fair to Good Atlas horror books at $5, each as well as several issues of Tubby at half Guide.

Independents - *Solar* #1 $15, #2 $10, #3 $22, #4 $15, #5, 6 and 7 at $15 each, #10 $55, #11 $7.50; *Magnus* #1 through #8 without coupons at $55, #1 $22, #2 $17, #7 $10, #10 $9, #12 $60; *Rai* #0 $12, #5 $18; Harris issues of Vampirella sold well with the black and white series selling quickly at cover price ($3.95) and the color #1 at $3. Many other independents sold well at fair (i.e. cover price or at little less) prices including *Cerebus*, assorted *Anne Rice comics, Desert Storm Journal*, etc. The Plasm albums had just come out at the time of this show, most dealers were asking $70 and up and we did not note any sales. We did sell ours at $50 including a card set though!

Summary - With a few exceptions, sales at the convention were concentrated towards inexpensive books that were definitely going into a collection. The speculators were notably absent.

See you in thirty days.

WILLIAM H FEIST III
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Introduction - Hey, Hey! It's Book Trader Bill and I'm back with my market report for the Overstreet Comic Book Monthly.

Golden/Silver Age - As last month, good Golden and Silver Age comics are rare.

Bronze Age - Sales of Bronze Age comics here fluctuate by title with what is hot in the Current Age comics. It its' hot, its' hot and if its' not, its' definitely not!

Current Age - DC. Again, as reported last month, support for DC's Reign of the Supermen and Batman: Knightfall stories continue to grow. I think that sales of the Superman titles will drop significantly after *Superman* #82 and *Adventures of Superman* #505 are released. However, I also think that Superman sales will continue to be significantly higher than pre-*Superman* #75 sales, even after the drop-off occurs. This will be particularly true if the new Clark Kent/Lois Lane TV series does well.

Batman: Knightfall is still the storyline to watch this Summer, however. Advance sign-ups for Batman: KnightQuest are beginning to come in, so I do not expect a significant drop in sales after *Batman* #500 and *Detective* #667.

The Bloodlines Annuals continue to get good reviews from my customers. This continues to be in stark contrast to comments (or the lack thereof) made about the Marvel annuals.

There is a great deal of customer anticipation about Superman: Speeding Bullets, and the upcoming Elseworlds title featuring the Batman.

Dark Horse - *Aliens vs. Predator* #1 did very well. Also, Comics Greatest World has done much better than initially expected. I have had to put in reorders on all of the Comics Greatest World titles so far. 'X' was particularly hot and has been quite difficult to find in back issue.

Defiant - Although comic customer comments about Plasm #0 were generally negative before the cards and albums were released, I got an unexpectedly strong show of interest from the non-sports card customers once the items were released. Unfortunately, it was too late to get any albums which, of course, was what everyone and their extended family wanted. There was also strong interest shown in the cards, so I ordered some and (surprise, surprise) no one wanted them after I got them in. Ah well, the joys of retail!

Image - A great deal of disappointment has been expressed over Image Comic's decision to cancel Mike Grell's Shaman's Tears. Image's image also continues to be hurt by customer distrust here due to the erratic release of their titles. Of particular note is *Brigade* #4. Several customers and staff have commented on the fact that *Brigade* #1 and #2 (Volume 2) will be out before the end of the first volume (*Brigade* #4). It has also been noticed that *Brigade* #4, *Darker Image* #2, *Pitt* #2 and *Youngblood Yearbook* #1 have all been scheduled, delayed and then rescheduled for three weeks in a row! This does not produce customer confidence!

Malibu - Like Dark Horse's *Comic's Greatest World*, Malibu's new Ultraverse did very well, resulting in reorders for all of the titles released so far. I still expect *Star Trek. Deep Space Nine* to do well, also.

Marvel - Marvel continues to lose customer confidence here. Old favorites continue to be old favorites (e.g. *Spider-Man, X-Men*, and so on). However, the comments regarding the repetitiveness of the stories and art and general confusion about the direction of many popular stories also continue. New titles, such as Marvel's 'Heavy Hitters' have done very poorly. And when mention of yet another Venom mini-series is made, customers often groan. However, the primary complaint continues to be about the constant gimmicks and the high prices that accompany such gimmicks. As stated last month, customer comments indicate that they want quality story and art inside rather than fancy gimmicks outside.

Valiant - the Deathmate prologue from Valiant did very well. I think that the entire Deathmate series will also do well. I have not heard any comments about the Deathmate cards yet, but we'll see.

Cards: **Skybox** - The Marvel Series IV cards continue to do poorly here. Nothing has been said about the Marvel Masterpiece II Cards coming late this year or early next year.

Upper Deck - The Valiant cards soon to be released by Upper Deck have received a great deal of attention here. I think they will probably be the hottest thing to hit the non-sports card market since Marvel Masterpieces I last year.

Hey, hey! It's Book Trader Bill, and I'll see ya next month.

HUGH O'KENNON
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As far as Golden Age and early Silver Age Comics are concerned, "the beat goes on". There continues to be many new converts to the ranks of Golden Age & Silver Age collectors as more and more collectors realize that this is where the real quality and rarity exists.

Books such as early Superman, Batman, Capt. Marvel, Human Torch, Spy Smasher, Bulletman and many others are fine examples of an uniquely American art form, and the "don't make them like that any more". If you can be happy with a clean, solid very good copy of a comic, you can buy many of these titles for less than one of the so-called "hot" titles of the last few years, which in many cases, were printed and saved by the millions. Some real bargains are available in the rarest of the GA books and these are the pre-GA (prior to Action #1) comics. These books carry relative low prices and are much more rare than most collectors realize.

Golden Age - Since my last report, I have been fortunate to acquire a considerable number of GA books in all grades. Apparently the current prices of these books has caused many more to come out of the attics as well as prompting collectors and investors to let go of a few of their prized possessions. Some sales since last time have been: *Advs Into the Unknown* #5 FN+ $75.00, *Air Fighters* #1 FN+/NM $490.00; *Four Color* #188 VF/NM $49.00, *Batman* #25 GD/VG $245.00, #137 FN $135.00, #140 VF $59.00; *Blackhawk* #50 VG/FN $37.00, #79 VF $61.00.

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What's Hot and What's Not

Silver Age - High Grade Silver Age books are still hard to find, although I have purchased several early Marvel collections, with Amazing Spider-Man, Daredevil, Avengers, Fantastic Four and similar books

Others - A large percent of my sales are in the Gold Key, Harvey, and Dell books, especially Four Colors which are great sellers. Dell & Gold Key TV and movie comics including the older Dell Movies sell quite well. A lot of dealers do not carry these, but I find them an especially interesting and satisfying segment of the comic book menu.

From time to time, I will carry a small selection of Big Little Books in my catalog, and I am constantly amazed at how many collectors of these little gems there are now

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Hello and welcome from New York's Capital District! Comic sales have been somewhat lukewarm. Oh sure, there have been some successes, but nothing outrageous. And there have been more than a few failures, and some of those have been spectacular.

It doesn't take a genius to figure out why. There is an unprecedented flood of new material that has come out this summer. My customers are great people, but they are not made of money. They have had to pick and choose among all these new books carefully. Need I add that all this new stuff has had a negative impact on back issue sales?

New Books - The two big launches this summer, Dark Horse's Comics Greatest World and Malibu's Ultraverse, did decently, but that's about it. These first issues were all good solid mid-range sellers, but that's all. I know that the Ultraverse was hoping for more, but I think that they should be satisfied with what they got. If Ultraverse behaves itself, I see no reason why they shouldn't join Valiant and Image by and by.

Comics Greatest World was greatly helped by their low cover price. At twice the cover price they would have sold much less than half.

Speculators are tearing their hair out over the Defiant First Edition Binder. It originally was supposed to retail for $15, but I have heard that it is selling for up to $80 in some places. The vast majority of my customers could care less, however Charging $50 for an initial offering ($15 binder, $35 box of cards) left a lot of people cold. Again, I think that Plasm (the comic!) will do decently, but that's about it. The future is murky. My magic eight ball says "Try again later".

Valiant and Image are still doing rather well, but they are experiencing some slippage. I don't think that this is any cause for alarm. I think that a lot of speculator types were fueling much of their phenomenal sales, and now those buyers are drifting away

What this means is that these books will experience a drop in sales, then stabilize and continue their upward climb at a more gradual rate. That is, as long as they keep producing books consistently. I don't think that this is much of a problem for Valiant, but Image is another matter. I have heard that Image is cancelling half their line in some sort of panic. While I do think that they were expanding a trifle too fast, I hope that they don't cut off their nose to spite their face.

Deathmate did well, but not nearly as well as I thought. X-O #0 sold well, in spite of a $3.50 cover price, but Secret Weapons #1 did poorly

DC is doing much better, thank you very much. Knightfall is the only genuine hit of the summer so far and the Superman titles seem to be keeping most of the sales gains they made with Doomsday (at least for me).

Vertigo is doing all right (Jonah Hex did rather well), but the rest of the DC Universe is dead in the water. New Titans #100 came and went with barely a ripple. The first issues of the Milestone books did well, but the sales dropped off sharply thereafter.

Short of starting all over again from scratch, I don't see what else they can do with the DC Universe. Still I am gratified to see that DC is shipping its books on time more often than not.

The same cannot be said for Marvel. The company that once set the standard for the industry is now falling badly behind. In fact, Marvel, in general, seems to be drifting in chaos. Sure, they are still #1, but most of this is coasting on what has gone before. Nearly all of their new books have had disappointing sales, and most of their established books continue to slowly lose readers.

Maximum Carnage did fairly well, but no better. Infinity Crusade is selling a fraction of what the previous series did and the crossovers are being completely ignored. For heaven's sake, there are over forty of them!

And yet the new #1's keep pouring out. All of these new books (with the possible exception of Sachs & Violens) will probably not sell very well. Trying to spin off new universes (a la Vertigo) does not seem to work for Marvel.

Back Issue Sales - For the first four months of the year were great, but now I'm starting to get the idea that about 20% of it was speculator fueled, and those speculators have gone. The sales for May and June were down substantially from the period before, but were up slightly from the same time last year although I should point out the summer of 1992 was horrifically bad. The numbers for 1991 beat those for 1993. And that's considering that I have two stores now, but had only one in 1991.

The following is a list of my best selling back issue titles. The first number following the titles represents the number of books sold per thousand for May and June, while the second number is for March and April. "Sold per Thousand" means that, for instance, for every 1000 back issues I sold, 45 of them were Uncanny X-Men.

1, *Uncanny X-Men* (45-48) 2; *X-Men* (44-31) 3, *Amazing Spider-Man* (39-49) 4; *Wolverine* (30-29) 5, *Hulk* (26-17) 6; *Captain America* (25-17) 7; *Spawn* (24-20) 8; *Iron Man* (22-14) 9, *Batman* (20-13) 10, *X-Force* (19-19) 11; *Fantastic Four* (19-20) 12, *Superman* (18-21) 13, *Legion of Superheroes* (17-12) 14; *X-Factor* (16-15) 15, *Spider-Man* (15-14) 16; *Ghost Rider* (13-14) 17; *Daredevil* (13-12) 18; *Silver Surfer* (13-10) 19, *Solar: Man of the Atom* (12-16) 20

Some of these numbers are flukes, I realize. Recently, I have had runs on Captain America, Iron Man, and Legion of Superheroes. Legion. This is something of a surprise, until you consider that you can buy the last twenty years worth of back issues for about $2 each. Not a great investment, but a great read

Among the top fifty titles, Valiant is beating the pants off of DC. In fact, take Superman and Batman away from DC and there is almost nothing there. Excluding those titles, their next book on the list is JLA at #42 (6 per thousand). That's Justice League of America, folks. All of the Valiant titles are in the top 50, with exception of Secret Weapons (too new) and Hard Corps (#62, not too shabby).

Again, Valiant's back issue sales belie their somewhat weak new issue sales. For example, all things being equal, Shadowman sells like Conan the Barbarian. I think I now understand why. We are selling Valiant new issues to the folks in Schenectady, but I think that we are selling Valiant back issues to the entire Capital District, and perhaps a little beyond. Well, it's a theory.

Looking at the list it's hard to say that Marvel is in any trouble. After all, don't they have the top 5 locked up and have 15 of the top 20? Well, not too long ago they had the **ENTIRE** top 20. Those days are gone for good. The farther you go down the list the more the balance changes. Marvel barely owns half of the top 50. This may get worse as time goes by. The reason for this is obvious: as good as it is, it is almost impossible for, say, Solar, with just 25 issues under its belt to compete with a book like Iron Man which is approaching issue #300. Give them time, and we'll see what's what.

Also, I should point out that many Marvel titles that are currently being published are experiencing almost no back issue sales at all. This list includes Silver Sable, Sleepwalker, Cage, Punisher (!!??), Groo, Conan, Moon Knight, Warlock & Infinity Watch, Darkhold, etc., etc. Books like these make me order my new issues, so I practically sell out in the first week.

Completely contradicting much of this, is the fact that X-Men is starting to kick Uncanny X-Men and Amazing Spider-Man out of the top spot. The readership of the X-Men seems to be rolling over: many disappointed older readers are leaving for greener pastures while newer, younger readers (perhaps brought in by the cartoon or the video game) want those recent back issues. Collecting all 300+ issues of Uncanny is an impossible dream, but 23 issues of the newer book is a very reachable goal

Silver Age - I've said it before and I'll say it again: the vast majority of my back issue sales are for stuff that's two years old or younger and this pretty much leaves Silver Age out in the cold. Some readers of these Market Reports may be a little confused by the fact that I say Silver age doesn't sell for me while others report that it is red hot.

Perhaps some of these dealers weren't around a few years ago. Back before 1990, Silver Age was indeed hot, and it was also much cheaper. While people are getting bigger bucks, it can't hold a candle to the volume I was doing back then. Also, I get the impression that these books sell better at shows (which I no longer do) and through the mail (ditto). I've talked to some established mail order people who have said that business is very good.

However, at my stores, expensive Silver Age just sits. Even key books like Giant Size X-Men #1, Uncanny X-Men #94, Secret Origins Annual #1, Brave & Bold #28, etc. take months and even YEARS to sell. At a store I think it simply does not make sense to sink a lot of money into expensive older books unless you have a customer waiting for them.

There is a new breed of collector who is looking for key books in high grade but turns up his (or her) nose at Very Fine books. To them Very Fine is low grade! Silver Age books in NM are hard to find, that's why they're expensive! But lesser grade books are now almost impossible to sell at anything approaching Overstreet price. Remember, common grade books vastly out number then NMs and even the VFs.

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The undisputed king of Silver Age is Amazing Spider-Man. It's not selling like it used to, but it still sells better than anything else.

That's about it from New York's Capital District. The only thing I'd like to add, is my support to Lee Hester's comments in the last Monthly about signed editions. I predict that these items will have next to no resale value. Till next time!

JOE FIELD
Flying Colors Comics & Other Cool Stuff
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Welcome to another update report from the staff of Flying Colors Comics & Other Cool Stuff. It is an important distinction to note that Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly reports the market, rather than trying to make the market. I think collectors should beware of guides that try to test the ceiling, folks, 'cause they are built on a pretty shaky foundation.

Golden Age: As reported here for the last few months, sales here are relatively few. The bargain hunters are having a field day with low to moderately priced books with good art. We've had more requests in the last few weeks for Timely and DC goldens, but our supply is really quite low. We get more action on low-priced esoteric books from the 40's, particularly anything with good girl art.

Silver Age: Our most active box here is Amazing Spidey, with this title being potentially the most evergreen of any back issue. We have seen steady interest in many Silver Age books, from Archies to Westerns, with continuing requests for Marvel and DC. Sales include *Avengers* #9 FN $60, *Action* #210 GD $24, *Conan* #1 FN $85, *Challengers* #15-20 GD @ Guide, plus many misc. *Amazing Spidey* (from #50-90) and misc. FF (from #17-100) in FR to VG @ Guide prices on the high end are stable, while lower grades show some growth.

Modern Age: There are no mega-sellers anymore, partially because there are very few surprises to the fans. Recent mainstream top sellers include (in order) *Spawn*, *X-Men*, *X-O Manowar* #0, *Deathmate Prologue*, *Sabretooth*, *Batman: Knightfall*, and the Superman titles. Malibu's Ultraverse and Dark Horse Comics Greatest World have sold at our level of expectation, which is about the same as above average Marvels. The hits with fans here are Strangers, X and Ghost. *Batman/Grendel* has sold very well for a prestige ($4.95 cover price) book.

New Image and Valiant titles have settled down from the instant-hit status of the last year. Other non-mainstream titles performing above expectations are Jonah Hex from Vertigo, *Evil Ernie: Resurrection* from Chaos and *Starchild* from Tailspin Press. Stiffs include the Marvel UK line, Image Plus, and all the Heavy Hitters line except *Feud* and *Trouble With Girls*.

Something else needs to be mentioned in this category, and that is the amazing resurgence of the X-titles as recent back-issues. While many dealers ordered extra cases of whatever Image or Valiant happened to be flavor of the week, some of the X-Men related books of the same time were drastically under-ordered, if demand is any indication. Demand is now very strong for all issues of *X-Men*, particularly #4-9, which fly out of the bin at $6.50 each, #10 is a solid $5, #11-13 @ $3 50-$4.00 each, #14-16 @ $5.00 each, #17 & 18 @ $3.00. Even #1A-D which doomsayers predicted would be worthless are quick sellers at $3 - 3.50 each.

X-Men Adventures sells fast at $3.50, with all others selling above cover price. Part of the reason all this is happening has to be related to the number of new fans generated by the X-Men series on Fox TV. No one could have predicted how many new mutant fans would come into the fold as result of the cartoon. Now if only Marvel would become re-dedicated to continuity and strong creative teams with their core line of super-hero books...

Overall, new comics sales are terrrific, with more diversity than ever. At least here in Northern California, we're finding multiple copy sales are few and far between.

Is Anyone Listening? A few random market notes:

*Publishers. Whatever happened to getting a complete story in the first issue of a comic book? If I were in the publisher's chair, this is one thing I believe could engender not only good will, but a certain amount of loyalty from fans who have felt suckered by instant multi-part stories. A complete story will allow more readers to sample a new book, then it's up to creativity to keep the readers coming back.

**I've become aware of show organizers who have instituted policies of not allowing dealers to sell books for below cover price. This unfair restraint of trade is not good. The only way we'll get back to a collector's market driven by creativity rather than speculation is to allow the market to wash through the truly over-ordered books.

***We're in for a test of Spawn's strength of character in the next few months as Todd McFarlane takes a leave of absence from the art on Image's most popular title. The question is how many people buy Spawn just for Todd's art and how many buy it for the Spawn character?

****I urge everyone to be wary of the offers from the Home Shopping Channel and QVC. Their hosts for the comic book collectibles segments constantly slam comic book retailers for charging unheard of amounts for signed books. In my opinion, the chances of the "deals" being offered ever being valuable someday are about as good as finding a mint copy of Action #1 in a fifty-pound bag of dog food. Could we at least get hosts on these shows that know what they're talking about?

That's it from here for this month. Remember... comics don't have to be "hot" to be cool... and keep those four colors flying!

DONALD W. RIORDAN
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Overview - Sales of back issues are up a bit. The traveling comic book fan is a good part of the reason. They are more likely to make the purchase immediately once a treasured item is found. Early Marvel and 60s DCs in about any condition are moving the best.

Marvel - Maximum Carnage has the most recent demand. Demand is currently high on the Venom limited series. We are getting positive comments on Epic Heavy Hitters. X-titles are moving but our prices have not moved up because ample supplies are always being offered. We applaud Marvel's Magneto #0 promotion. An actual reward for the customer committing to take a look at these already popular titles.

DC - We haven't had poor sales on a Vertigo title yet. If you're willing to try something a little different take one home and give it a chance. People are still reading and talking about Superman's return. There was a mini rush for missed Batman/Knightfall issues. Batman/Grendel is doing great.

Valiant - The supply/demand scales have tipped. We are now being offered more Valiant issues than we are selling.

Image - Spawn is still king. With many cancellations by Image itself it is asking a lot for any reader to remain loyal to the Image imprint. It is unclear if some of these limited runs will ever be finished. Once again fellows... if it isn't ready to go to press don't ask us to order it.

Independents - Slight increase in the demand for Love and Rockets. We cannot keep Bone issues in stock. Everyone that has tried this delightful title wants them all. Cerebus back issues still move more quickly than his "Phone Book" trade paperbacks. This is probably because of all of those interesting letters in the back. Very little movement on Dark Horse movie tie-ins. Interest in Elfquest is steady.

Of Interest To All - I think that everyone would benefit if Overstreet would run an in depth article on collecting supplies. With so many new entries into the collecting supply market and so many new trade names and claims being made, the water has become very muddy. Are these new manufactures really making any guarantees when they label their product "archival".

And to set the record straight - What is the Overstreet definition of "archival"? I have always thought that it meant that you could place a collectible inside and it would not cause ANY change to the collectible for at least 100 years. Let's hear from you.

TONY STARKS
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Newburgh, IN 47630-2298
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Greetings once again from Southern Indiana!

New Books - Knightfall and Reign of the Supermen are the key events here. Sales are strong on both new and back issues. Knightfall has even awakened interest in older (pre-Knightfall) back issues. Collectors are especially eager to find the "Venom" issues from *Legends of the Dark Knight* (issues #17-20, I think) which tie into Bane's abilities.

At Marvel, Spider-Man, X-Men, and Wolverine lead the way. Maximum Carnage has been very well received.

Valiant and Image continue to sell well. Several dealers have reported Valiant back issues becoming available, but Pre-Unity Valiant's are still scarce on dealers shelves around here.

Defiant's Plasm #0 card & binder set has come out, and due to dealers being shorted (allocated is too nice a word), the price is already in the $50-$60 range. As I predicted last month, the June Preview catalogue with the free Plasm #0 comic has become much sought after, and already sells in the $8-$12 range.

1970's Comics - They just keep selling better and better. I have noticed other dealers starting to mention these books in their market reports. I consider any '70s first issue featuring a popular character and/or with a nice run a bargain if under $15. Interest in Nova is way up due to the impending new series. There is also an upswing in interest in Marvels '70s female heroes - Ms. Marvel, Red Sonja, Spider-Woman and She Hulk.

Silver Age - Inexpensive SA ($15 or less) sells great, as does most any key issue in high or low

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grade. Gold Key's hero/adventure line is much in demand. And now that they are regularly listed in CBM, expect to see the "other" SA publishers (Charlton, Harvey, ACG, etc.) books being sought after. These books are at least 25 years old and very inexpensive, and some are nearly as fun to read as books from the "Big Two". See ya next time.

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Greetings from the Bluegrass State! Having survived summer school (anatomy, no less), I'm now knee-deep in conventions, and there is no shortage of them. Some general observations follow

Silver Age - This is still where the action is (no surprises) but I'm seeing both seasoned (?) collectors trying to fill gaps, and many younger collectors trying to run their favorite hero, often back into the early Silver period. DC requests are most often for the Flash 105-200, Green Lantern, Hawkman, Atom, and, of course, Showcase. The Superman and Batman titles are also getting attention (10-15¢ers) They are much tougher to find (especially in condition) than Marvel, but Marvel is a big winner in demand with most main titles being sought. Spidey 1-100, FF 1-100, TOS, TTA, JIM, Strange Tales seem to be on most want lists, preferred in a wide variety of conditions.

Dell/Gold Key: This covers several categories that are starting to deserve their own column. The Valiant camp are tracking Turok, Solar, Magnus, and others (Mighty Samson, M.A.R.S. Patrol, Aliens) as possible "sleepers". Fun stuff, and Manning is great!

TV/Movie/Cartoons: Nostalgia is back in a big way for 50s-60s shows, and the variety of characters/titles is truly amazing! Green Lantern, Avengers, Dark Shadows, Star Trek have the most organized following, but there seems to be a favorite show for all (Adam-12 to Zorro). Westerns are big, 4-Color, and monster films (Universal in particular) also move well. TV Cartoons have wide appeal, and since many (most?) were rolled up and stuck in a back pocket, condition requirements seem to have eased some, indeed many are glad to have one and upgrade it possible. There are still many bargains to be had here if you can find them.

Golden Age - DC, Timely, and Fawcett heroes lead demand, but *Police, Plastic Man, Spirit, Blue Beetle*, and most unusual others move too. Fiction House and Fox cheesecake books are popular, great art in most. Precode Horror is hot as the weather, as are prehero Atlas. Generally, pre-1963 books are exhibiting renewed interest on most levels

Acquisitions - Picked up another Spidey run 3-50, some horror, some lower grade gold DC, and a bunch of TV stuff. But the neatest cache was a stack of about 60 comics from 1949-1950. They were in the chimney of an old house that was being torn down (so I'm told). There was one each of Superman, Batman, Action, Tom Mix, Tarzan 8 & 9, Lil Abner, Gunfighter, Modern Love, this was like a time capsule, and a real pleasure to sort and read. Condition was surprisingly decent (VG-FN on most), even Buster Brown from the town of origin.

That's it for now, more to come. Have a great summer, happy hunting, and keep watching those chimneys. Later...

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DC - By now, everyone know about Batman's replacement and Superman's imminent return, books which continue to sell well off the shelf and in back issues. I would caution investors of the Knightfall storyline to watch out though as I see the same trend beginning to happen as with the death of Superman. A short quick term price hiking followed by a rapid decline as the gimmick is reversed. Look at what happened to prices of Superman once word got out of his return. How long will Batman prices stay jacked up once Bruce Wayne returns as Batman?

Bloodlines sells decently although there are no major new characters coming from this series that I see as anything to rave about. Vertigo is a steady increaser every month and I urge anyone interested in a truly unique and quality reading experience to pick a few of these books up. I would, however, suggest starting with books such as Animal Man, Sandman, or Hellblazer as some of the newer Vertigo books can be a bit bizarre.

Marvel - The Carnage storyline in Spider-Man sold decent enough though not as well as I had hoped. The Marvel annuals are less than wonderful again this year and I think the new characters being introduced are even less effective than some of the DCs. I also think investment potential for these books is extremely low, and the stories are lacking. I don't know about other store owners, but while I still sell the same amount of Marvels that I have in the past, I'm beginning to hear a lot of grumbling and a lot of people are asking my opinion about alternate titles. It seems that here, people don't seem to feel as confident about Marvel after seeing the Heavy Hitters and Marvel/UK books which continue to sell here very poorly. Excitement is big for the X-Men/Avengers thirtieth anniversary, but beyond that I see no quality merchandise coming from Marvel. Watch out is my best advice.

Image - What can you say about a company that decides to cancel the new books they got out on time in favor of the old books we're still waiting for them to catch up on. Sales have fallen in half over the last year and nobody here is clamoring for these books anymore

Valiant - Back issue sales are steady. New issue sales are steady. Excitement over new titles to be released is steady. If only all companies could be like this

Final Notes - Over the last few weeks, the buzz around here has been about the new Ultraverse line and the future Defiant books. Personally, I find the new Ultraverse books to be over rated. As for Defiant, confidence in future books has been waning here, with my regulars not particularly thrilled with the Plasm story or the prospect of Steve Ditko's Dark Dominion. This is not a knock on Ditko whose art I thoroughly enjoy.

My pick for both the reader and the collector is the new line of comics from Dark Horse. While it's true that you only get sixteen pages for a buck, it is more than worth it. The artwork, so far, has been excellent, the stories new and fresh, and for the investor low print runs. Remember when people had a choice between Image and Valiant. Everyone bought Image. Look at the price differential and the shear quality of the books. Anyone who bought Valiant made out big time. Now you have a choice between Ultraverse, Defiant, and Dark Horse. Everyone is running to grab Ultraverse and Defiant, need I say more.

First and foremost, comics are supposed to be fun. If you enjoy what you buy, then the rest is gravy.

BILL HOWARD
HENRY BABA
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By Way Of Introduction - We're pleased at many of the fine changes Bob has made to the book and eager to lend our opinions. OCBM is the only publication that appropriately expresses the major viewpoints of both the collector and dealer communities - the buyer/seller equation, if you will. To this extent, we're delighted he has asked us to participate.

Comic Boys, Ink. specializes in local conventions and mail order, primarily Silver Age comics and comic art. We buy and sell old comics to build our personal collections, not to make a living. This means that when you read our reports you should consider us collectors first and dealers second. Our basic credentials are as follows: Between us, we have over 90 years of collecting experience. Henry is the Marvel expert among us, and Michael the DC expert. I'm fortunate to have two of our hobby's most knowledgeable collectors as partners and friends. Last year I served on the Sotheby's committee for authenticity, certification and grading, and have been a regular contributor to CBM and now, OCBM. Since magazine publishing is my full-time occupation, I also lend a consultative hand to CBM from time to time.

As a regular element in our Market Reports, we will touch on a topical subject we think is of interest to the greater community of collectors and dealers. As the hobby and business of comics continues to gain national prominence and attract greater interest, we think it is incumbent upon us to discuss leading issues. On to the report:

Restoration - We've seen a recent trend that truly troubles us. That is the restoration of Silver Age comics. As many others have mentioned before us, the subject of restoration is multifaceted, and we obviously can't tackle it fully here. But, the increasing trend to restore Silver Age comics should serve as a warning flag to everyone. Simply put (and, of course, we invite you to disagree with us) we recommend NOT buying restored Silver Age comics.

Almost all Silver Age books are in decent supply in the low grades, even the most sought after keys and #1's. And certainly most books after 1965. Many Golden Age comics are scarce, by comparison, and the desire to preserve these few remaining pieces of history may legitimately have some place in our hobby (although not in our collections). There are now so many restored Golden Age comics in relation to non-restored Golden Age comics that the point is practically moot anyway. It is relatively easy, on the other hand, for a dealer to buy, and even hoard, low-grade reading copies of Silver Age comics and have them restored by one of the many talented conservators of ephemera plying their trade in the market today. These restorers are artists in their own right, and can make even the most badly mangled comic appear pristine after they've worked their magic. The dealer then takes the copy that he bought for mere dollars and sells it for hundreds and even thousands of dollars to buy-

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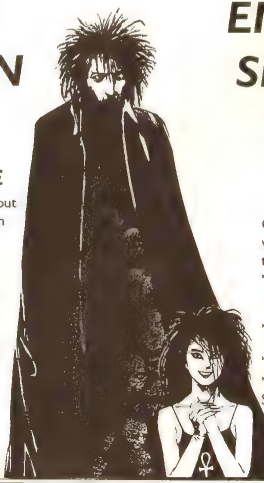

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ers unfamiliar with restoration in general, and looking for high grade Silver.

Why have these comics been altered in the first place? With the intention of preserving a rare item for historical purposes? Or, to cherish in one's personal collection? We doubt it. More likely, they were restored to make a very quick buck. Contrast this with the vast majority of Golden Age books which were restored by collectors themselves - collectors innocently looking for ways to preserve or repair the occasional stressed spine, torn cover, or loose centerfold. The profit angle was not a consideration.

One of the great things about collecting Silver Age comics in the first place is not having to worry too much about restoration - how to recognize, grade, price and generally value a restored comic. The intense, solitary search for beautiful high and even mid-grade copies of our favorite comics is one of the joyous pleasure of collecting Silver Age comics. And it's still possible to find great stuff at reasonable prices much of the time. We all know a story (or two or three) of the patient comic sleuth who was rewarded for his diligence. If restoration of Silver Age comics becomes a full-blown industry, a lot of really great comics which have no business being restored, will be. And that (in our humble opinions) is not good.

Sotheby's Fallout - We're anxiously awaiting the repercussions of the recently concluded Sotheby's auction (for a full market report, please see my article in last issue's OCBM). The stratospheric prices paid for comic collectibles is sure to reverberate for some time. Silver Age comics and comic art, regardless of condition, sold briskly, often setting records in the process. What this means for collectors and dealers we can only speculate, but here is a simple guess:

The leading edge of a market often dictates what happens elsewhere. For example, you might not like that baggy, grungy 60's look, but its already creeped into mainstream fashion design. Likewise, the major collectible auctions are setting the pace for the rest of the collectibles market. At first, we're not likely to see major changes in prices for the majority of merchandise sold at your local store or convention. Stuff that has always been readily available will not initially feel the aftershocks of Sotheby's. If you're looking to sell or buy high-grade comics or noteworthy comic art, well, that's another story. You've either hit, or been hit by, the proverbial jackpot - depending on whether you're selling or buying.. Look for stiff increases on key, high grade comics almost immediately, especially examples from true pedigreed collections like Mile Highs, White Mountains, and Gaines File Copies. Look for even stiffer increases on comic art, where the "I must have it now" syndrome actually makes sense since it truly is one of a kind, you may never get another change to own it.

Modern Material (1986 to Present) - At local conventions, and at our favorite local retail stores, we have spotted a declining interest in Valiants. Oh, they're still selling all right, but at a much slower pace. Prices have flattened too, and we think it will be many years, if ever, that prices go up again. Lately, it seems to be fashionable to suggest these comics are collectible because many of them were printed in relatively small quantities. True enough, at least as far as the small print runs are concerned. But, that means there are still literally thousands of MT copies in existence. Notice we said MT copies, not NM. This is no small distinction. Comics today are bagged as soon as they're bought. In fact, many stores in this area shove them into a polypropylene or ethylene bag they give away at the point of purchase. Contrast this with any comic purchased before say, the early '70s. Faced with a choice between a NM92 copy of *Showcase* #43, and a MT99 copy of *Magnus Robot Fighter* #1 (1992) which both Guide for about the same price, we'll take the *Showcase* ten out of ten times. Maybe there are a few hundred NM92 copies of *Showcase* #43 - tops. And since we think that many Valiants are in speculators hands, not collectors hands, we see these offered for sale everywhere.

Pre-Silver and Silver Age (1950-1969) - Atlas. Atlas, Atlas. We get more requests for Atlas than anything else, and in all grades. It seems like everyone is discovering or rediscovering these gems. Maybe it's the glut of superhero stuff on the market or soaring prices, but we find that people are branching out, looking to collect comics once considered esoteric. And Atlas', especially early Atlas', feature a difficult to beat combination of superior writing and superior artwork.

Some Sales - *Showcase* #34 VF82 $750, *All American Men at War* #102 FN55 $15; *Betty & Veronica Annual* #7 FN65 $25, *Fantasy Masterpieces* #1 VG54 $10, *Star Spangled War Stories* #92 VG54 $17; *Swamp Thing* #2 VF82 $18, *House of Secrets* #92 VF85 $175; *Fantastic Four* #49 FN74 $60, *Action Comics* #252 FN65 $350. Some Purchases - *Durango Kid* #7 NM92 $60

Pre-Golden Age through Post Golden Age (1933-1949) - Purchases: *Great Comics* #1 (Mile High) NM97 $195, *Blue Beetle* #32 (MH) NM97 $295; *Master Comics* #45 (MH) NM97 $495; *Master Comics* #61 (MH) NM97 & #62 (MH) NM97 $270, *Smash* #13 (MH) NM97 $450; *Captain Marvel, Jr.* #43 (MH) NM97. *Spirit Sundays* a full run from April 1942 through January 1943 in VF85 $900, *Dollman* #45, 46, 47, 60 all in FN65 for $75, $45, $60, $20

Original Art - Purchases. Kaluta cover to *Madame Xanadu* #1 $2500. Gil Kane chapter 2 title splash from *Green Lantern* #8 $1500. Kane chapter splash from *Green Lantern* #18 $860. Two Kirby-Everett interior pages from *Tales to Astonish* #79 $575. Bill Everett cover to *Crypt of Shadows* #2 $300. Berni Wrightson Marvel Frankenstein Novel pg. 189 $3500. Pages 2 and 3 from *Mystery in Space* #84 by Carmine Infantino $550.

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Soapbox Issue # 5: Collecting Silver Age vs Modern Age - is a rewarding yet frustrating hobby. A person who knows nothing about collecting could look at the titles like *Our Army at War*, *My Greatest Adventure*, and *Strange Tales* (Pre-Hero), and think that because there are listed prices and these prices went up since the last guide, that these issues are available all over the place. This is just not the case. For example, if *My Greatest Adventure* #6-10 are estimated to be currently selling for $93 in VF, does that mean that you could simply call up one of the larger comic book dealers across the nation and order these comics? Maybe you'd like them in the NM category. Disappointment is inevitable.

The point is that the "ignored-until-recently" titles which are starting to gain greater notoriety for whatever reason are just not out there to be had. The reason they are so cheap in the Guide is because there are so few substantiated reports of sales. It's actually quite difficult to really get an idea of what they actually will bring. Here we have a Catch-22 going. If there are no substantiated sales, then there can be no price hike. When there is no price hike, the person selling the book decides that the price hasn't gone up enough and the comic is therefore not worth selling a that price. Now there is no substantiated sale. With no substantiated sales, well… you get the idea.

There is a solution to this but its not foolproof. Some people believe that "everything has a price" In other words if you were offered enough money for something, you'd sell it. This figure of "enough" certainly varies from person to person, so more commonly than not, collectors and dealers ask a price above the suggested market value —1.2 X Guide, 1.5 X Guide, 3 X Guide, 13 X Guide, etc.

Sometimes you can offer to pay these prices for tough to find books and there is still no seller willing to sell them or maybe there are simply no one who has them in their possession. The point is that in the last few years Silver Age (especially between the years of 1955-1961) is drying up to the point that finding even a single item on one's want list book every month in sufficiently high grade is a chore and a revelation.

As more support for this idea I offer the following true experience. Recently someone told me that her boyfriend collects comics, and that the stuff he gets is the "truly rare stuff!". When I asked what "stuff" she was talking about, she said that it was *Sandman* and *Hellblazer*, *Magnus*, and *Harbinger*. I explained that these books are, in fact, quite easy to find. I further explained that I can offer X amount of money today for *Sandman* #1 or *Harbinger* #1 or whatever new stuff is hot right now, and if X is large enough, there will be 20 copies of each plopped in my lap by tomorrow.

But with '55-'61 material one can offer to pay an exorbitant amount and there are still no issues to be found. Once in a great moon, you'll be able to snag a much prized issue.

Modern comics cannot make the same claim. Their "investibility" is based on a very temporary and tenuous market condition. That is why so many seasoned dealers continue to preach the same gospel, i.e. Silver Age and Golden Age are the soundest long term investment.

Greytone Covers - On another note, Kudos to CBM for noting the greytone covers in *GI Combat* and *Our Fighting Forces*. Now it needs to list the *Our Army at War* #1-80. We war collectors have been asking for it to be included for quite awhile now. If *All American Men of War* and *Star Spangled War Stories*, which date back to August of 1952 can be included, then so can *Our Army at War* #1 up. *OAaW* #1 began the same month. There are greytone covers on *Our Army at War* #49, 54, 60, 124..126. *Star Spangled War Stories* #45 and *All American Men of War* #35 also have absolutely superb greytone covers. I believe that greytones were continuous in *GI Combat* from #75 until issue #104 and then graced the covers of #109 and 113. *GIC* #105-108, 110-112 don't have greytones. I'm not as familiar with the line of DC Mystery/Science Fiction but I know that there are a great deal of greytones in those titles as well—one of the finest being *Strange Adventures* #150. We should include a checklist of greytones of the Silver Age. This is another research task that is screaming to be accomplished.

Dallas' "Big D" Toy and premium Show - It was a lot of fun. I went looking for comic book and superhero related premiums and didn't find as much as I was hoping for, but I found more at this show than any other 10 shows combined. The dealers there truly knew their stuff. I was searching for very uncommon material but after "casing the joint" with

a fine tooth comb, I snagged a few items.

The two coolest items were the Phantom Syrroco wood composition figure from the King Features Set and the Captain America Sentinels of Liberty Badge. The elusive Flash and Wonder Woman pinbacks as well as the Phantom Members Club Pinback were nowhere to be found. One particularly impressive item was the Green Hornet Secret Compartment glow-in-the-dark ring which was absolutely flawless. It sold for a cool $1,000.00 to a lucky collector.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about the show was that the promoter of the convention enforced the policy preventing the display and sales of items after 1972. In other words, only dealers who could come up with serious stock from prior to that date would be able to set up at the show. I had never seen so many cool items.

Prices Paid - *Brave & Bold* #84 VF/NM $20; *Our Army at War* #108 VG $5. *Mad* #35 NM- $43; *All American MOW* #6 VF $65; *Strange Tales* #114 VF+ $230; Phantom Syrroco $940; Captain America Sentinels of Liberty Badge $500; Spider-Man Vitamin Ring with original box and Vitamin Canister $300.

Recent Sales - *Amazing Spider-Man* #51 VF $65; *Atom* #18 VF/NM $38; *Avengers* #57 NM- $45; *Avengers* #58 VF/NM $30, *Superman* #199 VF+ $120.

Till next, thanks for reading and I look forward to seeing everyone at the San Diego Comic Convention

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Comic Con Report - Greetings and welcome to this month's report from the great northeastern state of Maine.

Recent Releases - This month's Spider-Man titles were our best selling titles as Maximum Carnage came to it's conclusion in the very hot selling *Spider-Man Unlimited #2*. Darkhawk sales have more than tripled over the last month along with the Uncanny X-Men. Malibu Ultraverse titles are also moving very well, but a strange drop in the DC Batman Knightfall line has developed here as well as the drop in the Superman titles. Could it be that the collectors are as fed up with the stories and art being foisted on us?

At this time I must stop and applaud Overstreet for not following the hype prices, looking at the total over-all picture, and for allowing store owners (like myself) who actually deal with the collectors on a day-to-day basis to report on what's really going on at the comic market.

Back Issues - Our biggest demand for back issues have been for the Silver and Bronze Age Marvels. Still, overall the Spider-Man titles are the books in demand. Sales: #116 NM $15, #34 NM $55.

Image - Sales with Image are beginning to slow down a bit, but I believe that this is simply a small slump before the Deathmate explosion.

Closing - It was the talented people from Marvel who built Image and I believe slowly readers are realizing that the big attraction is that they look like an updated Marvel comic. The Marvel Zombies of the past are now the Image Zombies of today. After Marvel makes the much needed changes to update itself, I think we will be seeing them beginning to return to the ever popular giant that made comic collecting a cool thing to do!

JAMES & GINA DILL

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Hello again from the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina. Here's what's happening in our part of the big world of comics.

Current. DC - Batman Knightfall is the best selling new comic we've had on the shelf lately. No matter how many we order, we can't seem to keep them.

The only other titles that seem to be picking up steam are the Superman titles, which are moderate sellers (nothing big).

Marvel - Maximum Carnage is one of the best sellers for Marvel. Venom: Funeral Pyre was a sell out title as were Sabretooth and Deadpool. All X-titles with the exception of X-Factor are relatively good sellers. Avengers and Captain America titles seem to be picking up steam lately. No other real change seems to be taking place in other Marvel titles.

Valiant - Valiant titles seem to be dying a horrible death. The only title left that sells even moderately well is Turok. These titles, we feel, are not good long-term investments.

Image - All titles still selling strong as ever. Wild C.A.T.S. Trilogy just came out, and it was a total sell out! The only titles that seem to be dead here are Trencher and the 1963 titles. Tribe was a dead comic before it even hit our market.

Back Issues: DC - Knightfall titles are extremely good sellers with Knightfall Part 11 selling as high as $15.00. Also, Sword of Azrael is in extremely high demand. All other DC's just sit.

Marvel - All Sabretooth appearances are still selling extremely well and are still in high demand thanks to the limited series.

Also, Venom appearances are in high demand, especially in Spider-Man McFarlane issues. Most all Spider-Man back issues are good sellers, but these seem to be the most popular issues. Wolverine and X-Men are still good sellers, but no major change.

Valiant - Demand for these titles have slowed down to almost a screeching halt. We've really narrowed down our buying on these, and are selling our back issues at 1/2 price just to move them. We think the market for these is going to get worse from here on out.

Image - The only back issue titles here that seem to be doing well are Spawn and Shadowhawk.

Silver Age: We haven't had much activity going on here lately. Spider-Man early Goblin appearances are the most high in demand. Fantastic Four #48 first appearance Silver Surfer in VG sold for $135.00. That's really about it for Silver Age right now.

Trading Cards: Marvel IV seems to have slowed a bit, but are still extremely hot sellers. 2099 cards sell well at $6.00 a piece. We sold our Spider-Man vs. Venom 3D quickly at $50.00. Marvel Masterpiece has slowed down quite a bit, but there is a lot of anticipation for the Marvel Masterpiece Series II. The Plasm cards were average sellers, nothing really big. What is really big in the card market now seems to be the Deathwatch 2000 cards, with the Shaq. specialty card selling for as high as $50.00, and the Hybrid cards selling for $10.00. Frazetta cards came out this week, and those were very good sellers for us. Nothing else new to report in the card market; and that about wraps it up for this report.

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Hello again! Well, we're well into the Summer, and to be honest it hasn't been as busy as in years past. Most likely it's because it has rained here nearly every single day since school let out. Not nearly what you folks in the midwest are getting, but enough to keep the kids away. By the way, good luck to our fellow dealers and collectors in the flood ravaged areas!

On a cheerier note, we've opened our fourth store, and so far it's been a big success! In just our second week of being open we had a thousand dollar sale of assorted books, including an *Avengers* #4 in GD for $70, and a VG *Captain America* #100 for $40. On to the report!

Golden Age - Not much action this month. Acquisitions: We purchased a small batch of 40's strip reprint comics like Ace and Tip Top but that's about it. Sales: *Detective* #93 NM $500, *Young Men* #27 VG $100.

Silver Age - Sales: *Fantastic Four* #7 GD $60; *Hulk* #1 FR $400; *Tales of Suspense* #8 VG $85; *Tales of Suspense* #52 VF $75; *Tales to Astonish* #2 GD $75. *The Atom* #3 VG $70; *Batman* #171 GD $85. *Daredevil* #8 FN $66; *X-Men* #12 FN+ $110. Acquisitions: We've picked up several hundred Silver Age books, but nothing with oomph. Mostly just runs of mid sixties *Avengers, Spider-Man, JLA, Green Lantern*, etc. Almost all the books from the high grade collection we bought last month have been sold. From the seventies, Batman stuff with Neal Adams art is real hot, as are Barry Smith Conan and Avengers issues. Ghost Rider, Morbius, Deathlok, & Thanos appearances have been slow this month. Sales: *X-Men* #94 VG+ $100; *Giant Size X-Men* #1 FN $100. *Marvel Spotlight* #5 FN $50; *Marvel Team Up* #1 VG $50.

New Stuff - Batman and Superman titles are on fire with the Knightfall and Reign of the Supermen storylines coming to their finales. Look for the Superman stuff to rise, but with the huge increases in the Knightfall stuff since the June update these should stay about the same, with the exceptions of *Vengeance of Bane* $30 and *Sword of Azrael* #3 & #4 $20 (much scarcer than #1 & 2). Valiant's seem to be holding their own at around guide. Sales: *Maxx Gold 1/2* $75; *Knightfall Platinum* $90; *Deathmate Gold* $75; First printing Plasm Binders, several at $75; *Bloodshot* #6 is selling briskly at $6; *Rai* #0 $30. The Spider-Man Maximum Carnage series just ended, and all parts are selling well, with the early issues bringing double cover prices. Marvel's special cover/gimmick books don't seem to have that much effect on sales anymore. The customers seem tired of them and are only buying them if they like the storyline. That's about it for now, see you next time! ■

END OF MARKET REPORTS

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Introduction

Welcome to another issue of *Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly*, the most accurate and dependable Price Guide magazine for comic books and non-sports cards in the nation!

The first Overstreet COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE was published in 1970 and has been published every year since then. The first issue of Overstreet's Comic Book Price Update (supplement to the annual Overstreet Price Guide #12) was published in the Fall of 1982. After a few years of publishing a mid-year Update, the comic market finally demanded a more frequent price report. The Update eventually became a bi-monthly. Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly is now the official monthly price guide magazine for Overstreet Publications.

GENERAL INFORMATION

About Pricing: The prices shown in the price guide section represent an honest and responsible evaluation of current market values. The prices represent an average of dealer retail prices compiled from data supplied by our Board Of Special Advisors. Prices often vary widely from region to region because supply and demand factors often vary. Therefore, each buyer and seller should determine prices based on both prices listed here and regionally specific supply and demand factors.

The Listed Prices in this Guide particularly on more expensive books, are a "moving average" of the market prices realized over the past month. Thus prices are constantly being recorded and averaged prior to the release of each issue. It is important for collectors to understand that since the Overstreet price is an average, it will never be the same as the highest or lowest most recent sale price.

Collectors will, at some point, attempt to sell some or all of their acquisitions at a wholesale price to dealers. It is important to remember that dealers buy comics in order to resell them to other collectors. Therefore, dealers will always pay a higher percentage for issues that they think can be sold quickly and a much lower percentage for items that have a low demand. Dealers must always buy at a percentage that allows for their overhead, plus a fair margin of profit. Most dealers will pay anywhere from 25-75% of the prices listed in this guide depending on inventory needs and local market conditions. However, material from the past 10 to 15 years is readily available and dealers may only offer a very small amount (20% or less) or may not be interested at all.

PRICING NEW COMICS:

This guide lists retail prices of most current comic books. The latest issues are usually listed at cover price, except in certain cases when market conditions warrant.

PRICING LOWER GRADES

Prices listed in this Guide are for comic books in Very Good (VG), Very Fine (VF) & Near Mint (NM) condition. The value of a comic in a lower grade is a specific percentage of the near mint value. To find the correct price spread for a specific book, consult the annual *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide*. Please note, however, that price spreads vary, based on many factors including demand, rarity in grade, and overall rarity.

PRICING INDICATORS

+ An issue that has increased in price since last issue
- An issue that has decreased in price since last issue
H A high demand issue that is currently in vogue

GRADING COMICS

Grading comic books is essentially describing its condition, which may range from absolutely perfect "newsstand" condition (MINT) to extremely worn, dirty, and torn (POOR). For a more detailed instruction on the art of grading comic books, consult *The Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide* available in most book stores, comic specialty shops, or direct from Overstreet Publications.

POLYBAGGED COMICS

It is the official policy of Overstreet Publications to grade comics regardless of whether they are still sealed in their polybag or not. The polybag and it's entire contents may be preserved so that all components of the original manufactured product remain together.

RESTORED COMICS

Since this hobby began it has always been tempting for the dealer or collector to perform repairs on comic books. In the past, tape was used to seal tears, rips, loose covers, and centerfolds and spine reinforcement. It is now known that many tapes are very damaging to paper. Today, most repairs are done with neutral pH glues, special invisible papers, and webbing reinforcement.

For years now, comic books have had minor to major restoration work performed. It is very important for the novice collector to understand that most repaired/restored books are not worth the same as books in the same grade in their ***original*** condition. The more expensive the book, the more likely it has been restored. After restoration these books are not actually in higher grades, but are altered lower grade books that are described by their **Apparent Grade**. Some books do need to be repaired and/or restored to improve to preserve them.

Note: The lower the grade, the less objectionable repairs/restoration become. In fact, low grade books sell better when they have been cleaned to achieve a better visual appeal. Whenever possible, books should be examined very closely for repairs and restoration before purchase. Some of the major things to look for are: bleached/whitened pages and covers, trimmed pages and covers, spine and tear reinforcement, glue, replaced staples, replaced sections of the cover, wrinkles pressed from covers, recolored (color touch) and reglossed covers.

Dealers should disclose any known restoration at the time of sale. Any restoration is considered a defect because it is an alteration of the original condition of the book.

GRADING DEFINITIONS

The hardest part of evaluating a comic is being objective, and knowing what characteristics to look for in making your assessment. Very Important: A book must be graded in its entirety, considering **all** defects. Do not grade just the cover alone. A book in any of the grades listed must be in **Original Unrestored Condition**. Restored books must be described as such. After examining a comic book thoroughly, one of the following grades may be assigned:

The 8 Nomenclature Grades and The Overstreet Numerical Equivalent

Numerical Grade				
Grade/abbreviation	High	Center	Low	Point Spread
Mint (MT)	100	99	98	(3)
Near Mint (NM)	97	94	90	(8)
Very Fine (VF)	89	82	75	(15)
Fine (FN)	74	65	55	(20)
Very Good (VG)	54	45	35	(20)
Good (GD)	34	25	15	(20)
Fair (FR)	14	10	5	(10)
Poor (PR)	4	3	1	(4)

*THE EIGHT NOMENCLATURE GRADES AND THEIR NUMERIC RANGE**

MINT (MT) (ONE 100-98) Near perfect in every way. Only the most subtle bindery or printing defects are allowed. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimal fading. Corners are cut square and sharp. Staples are generally centered and clean with no rust. Cover is generally centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and fresh. Spine is tight and flat.

NEAR MINT (NM) (ONE 97-90) Nearly perfect. Cover is flat with no surface wear. Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimum of fading. Corners are cut square and sharp with ever so slight blunting permitted. Staples are generally centered, clean with no rust. Cover is well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and like new. Spine is tight and flat.

VERY FINE (VF) (ONE 89-75) An excellent copy with outstanding eye appeal. Sharp, bright and clean with supple pages. Pages and covers can be yellowish/tannish (at the least) but not brown and will usually be off-white to white.

FINE (FN) (ONE 74-55) An exceptional, above average copy that shows minor wear but still relatively flat, clean and glossy with no subscription crease or brown margins. Typical defects include: light spine wear, minor surface wear, a light crease, minor yellowing/tanning to interior pages. Compared to a VF, cover inks are beginning to show a significant reduction in reflectivity but is still highly collectible and desirable.

VERY GOOD (VG) (ONE 54-35) The average used comic book most commonly found. This comic shows moderate wear but eye appeal has not been reduced to the point that it is not desirable. One or two minor markings on cover or minor spine roll are allowed. Lightly creased along spine or extremities, subscription crease, loose centerfold, or minor chip or piece missing allowed.

GOOD (GD) (ONE 34-15) This comic has all pages and covers, although there may be small pieces missing. Commonly creased, scuffed, abraded and soiled, but books in this grade are completely readable. Paper quality is low but not brittle.

FAIR (FR) (ONE 14-5) Very heavily read and soiled, but still complete. Damaged beyond collectibility for most collectors, brings 30-50 per cent of the Good price.

POOR (PR) (ONE 1-4) Sufficiently degraded so as to have little or no collector value. Often severely stained, abraded, defaced, or damaged beyond readability.

* The Numeric Ranges from Poor to Mint are further explained in *The Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide*.

The graph at left illustrates the Overstreet Nomenclature Grades and their corresponding numeric range.

Now with three prices! VG VF NM

Adventures of Bob Hope #106 © DC

ACTION COMICS (Weekly #621-642)
Dec. 1954-Present
National Periodical Publ./DC Comics

1-Reprint, 1988, 50¢-c			0.50	
201-Last pre-code issue	58.00	131.00	175.00	
202-220	50.00	113.00	150.00	
221-240	40.00	90.00	120.00	
241, 243-251	30.00	68.00	90.00	
242-Origin & 1st app. Brainiac	217.00	488.00	650.00	H
252-Origin & 1st app. Supergirl	214.00	538.00	750.00	H
253-2nd app Supergirl	43.00	107.00	150.00	H
254-1st meeting of Bizarro & Superman	59.00	96.00	135.00	H
255-1st Bizarro Lois Lane	26.00	64.00	90.00	
256-261	17.00	43.00	60.00	
262, 264-266, 268-270	13.00	32.00	45.00	
263-Origin Bizarro World	19.00	46.00	65.00	H
267-3rd Legion app	79.00	196.00	275.00	H
271-275, 277-282, 282-Last 10¢ issue	11.00	29.00	40.00	
276-6th Legion app.	34.00	86.00	120.00	
283-Legion Of Super-Villains app.	14.00	36.00	50.00	
284-Mon-El app.	14.00	36.00	50.00	
285-12th Legion app	14.00	36.00	50.00	
286-289	7.00	19.00	26.00	
290-Phantom Girl app.	7.00	19.00	26.00	
291, 292, 294-299	5.00	13.00	18.00	
293-Origin Comet	11.00	27.00	38.00	
300-(5/63)	6.00	14.00	20.00	
301-303, 305-308, 310-320	3.00	9.00	12.00	
304-Origin & first app. of Black Flame	4.00	11.00	15.00	
309-Legion app.	4.00	10.00	14.00	
321-333, 335-340	3.00	6.00	9.00	
334-Giant (6-'39)	5.00	11.00	16.00	
341-346, 348-358	1.90	4.60	6.50	
347, 366 (Giants G-33 & G-45)	2.90	7.10	10.00	
361-372, 374-380	1.40	3.60	5.00	
373-Giant (G-57)	2.30	5.70	8.00	
381-424, 411-Eclipse origin-r	1.10	2.90	4.00	
425-Adams art	1.70	4.30	6.00	
426-436, 438, 439	0.90	2.10	3.00	
437, 443-(100 page giants)	1.40	3.60	5.00	
440-1st Grell-a on Green Arrow	1.70	4.30	6.00	
441-Grell-a on Green Arrow	1.40	3.60	5.00	
442, 444-499	0.70	1.80	2.50	
500-Superman life story (1 00, 68pgs)	0.60	1.40	2.00	
501-551, 554-582	0.40	1.10	1.50	
552, 553-Animal Man-c/s	1.70	4.30	6.00	
583-Alan Moore	2.00	5.00	7.00	
584-Byrne begins	0.40	1.10	1.50	
585-599, 598-1st app. Checkmate	0.30	0.70	1.00	
600-(2,50, 84 pgs.)	1.10	2.90	4.00	
601-642. Weekly issues (1 50, 52 pgs.)	0.50	1.00	1.50	
643-Monthly begins, Perez-a/c, scripts	0.50	1.00	1.50	
644-648, 651-661, 663-666, 668-67	0.40	0.70	1.00	
650-(1 50, 52 pgs.)-Lobo cameo	0.50	1.00	1.50	
662-Superman reveals id to Lois Lane	1.20	2.30	3.50	
667-(1 75, 52 pgs.)	0.60	1.10	1.75	
680-682	0.40	0.80	1.25	
683-Doomsday cameo	2.80	4.90	7.50	H
683-2nd & 3rd printings	0.40	0.80	1.25	
684-Doomsday battle issue	2.80	5.20	8.00	H
685, 686-Funeral For A Friend iss.	0.70	1.30	2.00	H
685-2nd & 3rd printings	0.40	0.80	1.25	
687-(1.95)-Collector's Ed.	0.70	1.30	2.00	
687-(1.50)-Newsstand Ed. w/mini-poster	0.50	1.00	1.50	
688-690 (1 50)- 688-Guy Gardner-c/s	0.50	1.00	1.50	
Annual 1 ('87)-Arthur Adams-a; Batman app	2.10	3.90	6.00	
Annual 2 ('88, 1.75)-Perez-c/a	0.70	1.30	2.00	
Annual 3 ('91, 2.00, 68 pgs.)	0.70	1.30	2.00	
Annual 4 ('92, 2.50)	0.90	1.60	2.50	
Annual 5 ('93, 2.50)	0.90	1.60	2.50	

ADAM-12 (TV)
Dec. 1973-No. 10, Feb. 1976 (Photo covers)
Gold Key

1	6.30	11.70	18.00	
2-10	2.80	5.20	8.00	

ADDAMS FAMILY (TV cartoon)
Oct. 1974-No. 3, Apr. 1975 (Hanna-Barbera)
Gold Key

1	8.60	21.40	30.00	H
2, 3	6.30	11.70	18.00	H

ADVENTURE COMICS
No. 200, May,1954-No. 503, Sept, 1983
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics

200	79.00	196.00	275.00	
201-209	54.00	136.00	190.00	
210-1st app. Krypto	471.00	1,205.00	1,702.00	H
211-213, 215-220	43.00	107.00	150.00	
214-2nd app. Krypto	57.00	143.00	200.00	H
221-246; 241-Batman x-over (6/58)	37.00	93.00	130.00	
247-1st app. Legion/Super Heroes (4/58)	743.00	1,857.00	2,600.00	
248-252, 254, 255, Green Arrow in all	27.00	68.00	95.00	
253-Superboy/Robin first meet	37.00	93.00	130.00	H
256-Origin Green Arrow	107.00	268.00	375.00	H
257-259	24.00	61.00	85.00	
260-1st Silver Age origin of Aquaman (5/59)	109.00	271.00	380.00	H
261-266, 268, 270	17.00	43.00	60.00	
267-2nd Legion Of Superheroes	164.00	411.00	575.00	H
269-Intro Aqualad	36.00	89.00	125.00	H
271-Origin Lex/Bor retold	47.00	105.00	140.00	H
272-274, 276-280; 276-3rd Metallo	15.00	34.00	45.00	
275-Origin Superman/Batman team retold	33.00	75.00	100.00	H
281, 284, 287-289; 288-Bizarro cover	15.00	34.00	45.00	
282-5th Legion app.	33.00	75.00	100.00	
283-Intro Phantom Zone	25.00	56.00	75.00	
285-1st Bizarro World story in Adv.	23.00	53.00	70.00	
286-1st Bizarro Mxyzptlk	20.00	45.00	60.00	
290-6th Legion app., last 10¢ issue	30.00	68.00	90.00	
291, 292, 295-298; 295-Bizarro-c	10.00	23.00	30.00	
293-13th Legion app.	20.00	45.00	60.00	
294-1st Bizarro M. Monroe, Pres. Kennedy	20.00	45.00	60.00	H
299-1st Gold Kryptonite (6/62)	12.00	26.00	35.00	
300-Legion series begins (9/62)	76.00	189.00	265.00	
301-Origin Bouncing Boy	23.00	57.00	80.00	
302-305	17.00	38.00	50.00	
306-310	13.00	29.00	38.00	
311-320	9.00	21.00	28.00	
321-Intro Time Trapper	7.00	17.00	22.00	
322-330; 327-Intro Lone Wolf in Legion	7.00	13.00	20.00	
331-340	5.60	10.40	16.00	
341-Triplicate Girl becomes Duo Damsel	4.20	7.80	12.00	
342-345, 347, 350, 351	3.20	5.90	9.00	
346, 348, 349	3.50	6.50	10.00	
352, 354-360	2.80	5.20	8.00	
353-Death of Ferro Lad in Legion	4.60	8.50	13.00	
361-364, 366, 368-370	2.10	3.90	6.00	
365, 367, 371, 372	2.50	4.60	7.00	
373, 374, 376-382; 380-Last Legion in Adv.	2.10	3.90	6.00	
375-Intro Quantum Queen	2.50	4.60	7.00	
381-Supergirl begins (1st full length, 6/69)	0.70	1.30	2.00	
382-389, 391-400	0.70	1.30	2.00	
390, 403-(90 pg. giants G-81 & G-81)	2.10	3.90	6.00	
401, 402, 404-416; 52 pg. issues	0.70	1.30	2.00	
403-Giant G-81; Legion-r	1.80	3.30	5.00	
411, 413, 418, 419; 36 pg. issues	0.40	0.70	1.00	
412-Reprint origin & 1st app. Animal Man	1.40	2.60	4.00	
414-r/2nd Animal Man from Str. Adv. #184	1.10	2.00	3.00	
415, 420-Animal Man reprints	0.50	1.00	1.50	
416-Giant DC-10; G.A.-r	0.40	0.80	1.20	
417-Mirrow Vigilante	0.40	0.80	1.20	
421-424	0.40	0.70	1.00	
425-New look begins	0.50	1.00	1.50	
426-458; 435-Mike Grell's 1st comics work	0.40	0.70	1.00	
459-480, 483-486	0.40	0.70	1.00	
481, 482: Death of Earth II Batman	1.40	2.60	4.00	
487-Starman by Ditko, Plastic Man begin.	0.50	1.00	1.50	
488-490: Last comic-size iss.	0.40	0.70	1.00	
491-499; 491-100 pg. digests begin	0.40	0.80	1.20	
500-All Legion reprints	0.60	1.00	1.60	
501-503: Golden Age reprints	0.40	0.80	1.20	

ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN
No. 51, Jan.1954-No. 174, Aug, 1967
American Comics Group

51(2-D effect-c/story)	36.00	89.00	125.00	H
52-58 (3-D effect-c/stories)	31.00	79.00	110.00	H
59-3-D effect story only	28.00	50.00	70.00	H
60-Woodcrepe-a by Landau	13.00	30.00	40.00	H
61-Last pre-code issue (1-2/55)	12.00	26.00	35.00	H
62-70	8.00	19.00	25.00	
71-90	6.00	12.00	18.00	
91-96(#95 on inside),107,116	8.00	19.00	25.00	
92-95,97-99,101-106,108-115,117-127	6.00	10.00	16.00	
100	7.00	13.00	20.00	
128-Williamson/Krenkel/Torres-a	6.00	10.00	16.00	
129-150	5.00	9.00	14.00	
151-153; 153-Magic Agent app.	4.00	8.00	12.00	
154-Maneiss series begins (origin)	6.00	10.00	16.00	
155-167 (169-174: 157-Magic Agent app.	4.00	8.00	12.00	
168-(3/68-slp)	5.00	9.00	14.00	

ADVENTURES OF BOB HOPE, THE
No 32, Apr-May, 1955-No. 109, Feb-Mar. 1968
National Periodical Publications

32-40 32-1st code approved issue	17.00	38.00	50.00	
41-50	13.00	30.00	40.00	
51-70	9.00	20.00	26.00	
71-93, 95-105 (95-1st monster issue (11/65)	5.00	9.00	14.00	
94-Aquaman cameo	6.00	10.00	16.00	
106-109-All monster	9.00	20.00	26.00	

ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN AMERICA
Sept. 1991-No. 4, Jan. 1992 (4.95, color, mini-series)
Marvel Comics

1-Embossed-c	2.00	3.00	5.00	
2-4: Austin-c/a(i)	2.00	3.00	5.00	

ADVENTURES OF JERRY LEWIS, THE
(Advs. of Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis No. 1-40) (See Super DC Giant)
No. 41, Nov 1957-No 124 May-June, 1971
National Periodical Publications

41-60	8.00	19.00	25.00	
61-80: 68, 74-Photo-c	7.00	13.00	20.00	
81-91 93-96,98-100: 89-Bob Hope app	4.00	8.00	12.00	
92-Superman cameo	6.00	10.00	16.00	
97-Batman/Robin x-over; Joker-c/story	8.00	19.00	25.00	
101-104-Neal Adams-c/a	7.00	13.00	20.00	
102-Beatles app.	8.00	19.00	24.00	
105-Superman x-over	6.00	9.00	14.00	
106-111,113-116	3.00	4.00	6.00	
112-Flash x-over	6.00	9.00	14.00	
117-Wonder Woman x-over	3.00	5.00	8.00	
118-124	2.00	3.00	5.00	

ADVENTURES OF MIGHTY MOUSE
No. 126, Aug, 1955-No. 160, Oct, 1963 (Two #144's; #129-137 have no #)
St. John/Pines/Dell/Gold Key

129 (9/55), 1027, 128-St. John issues	7.00	13.00	20.00	
nn (#129, 4/56) - 144 (9/59)-Pines issues	6.00	10.00	16.00	
144 (10-12/59) - 155 (7-9/62)-Dell issues	5.00	9.00	14.00	
156 (10/62) - 160 (10/63)-Gold Key issues	5.00	9.00	14.00	

ADVENTURES OF MIGHTY MOUSE (Formerly Mighty Mouse)
No. 166 Mar, 1979-No. 172, Jan, 1980
Gold Key

166-172	2.00	3.00	5.00	

ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN (Formerly Superman)
Jan. 1987-Present
DC Comics

424	0.70	1.30	2.00	
425-449: 449-Invasion	0.60	1.10	1.75	
450-463	0.50	1.00	1.50	
464-Lobo-c/app. pre-dates Lobo #1	1.70	2.60	4.00	
465-479, 481-491: 491-Last $1.00-c	0.50	0.70	1.00	
480-(1,75, 52 pgs.)	0.70	1.10	1.75	
492-495	0.50	0.80	1.25	
496-Doomsday cameo	2.10	3.30	5.00	H
496, 497-2nd printings	0.50	0.80	1.25	
497-Doomsday battle iss.	2.50	3.90	6.00	H
498, 499-Funeral for a Friend iss.	1.30	2.00	3.00	H
498-2nd & 3rd printings	0.50	0.80	1.25	

500-(2:95, 68 pgs.)-Collector's Ed. 1.30 2.00 3.00
500-(2:50, 68 pgs.)-Regular Ed. w/different-c 1.00 1.60 2.50
501-(1:95)-Collector's Ed. 0.80 1.30 2.00
501-(1:50)-Regular Ed. w/mini-poster, diff.-c 0.50 1.00 1.50
502-50¢ 502-Supergirl-c/story 0.50 1.00 1.50
Annual 1 (87) 0.60 0.90 1.40
Annual 2 ('90) Annual 3('91, 2:00) 0.60 1.30 2.00
Annual 4 ('92, 2.50) G. Gardner/Lobo c/story 1.00 1.60 2.50

ADVENTURES OF THE FLY (The Fly; No 2: Fly Man No. 32-39)
Aug, 1959-No. 30, Oct, 1964; No. 31, May, 1965
Archie Publications, Radio Comics
1-Shield app , origin The Fly; S&K c/a 53.00 232.00 325.00 H
2-Williamson, S&K 50.00 125.00 175.00
3-Origin retold 34.00 86.00 120.00
4-S&K-c; Powell-a; Shield x-over 23.00 57.00 80.00
5-10 7-Black Hood app.; 8, 9-Shield x-over 17.00 39.00 52.00
11-13, 15-20 20-Origin Flygirl retold 11.00 24.00 32.00
14-Intro & origin Flygirl 15.00 34.00 45.00
21-30 7.00 17.00 22.00
31-Black Hood, Shield, Comet app. 8.00 19.00 25.00

ADVENTURES OF THE JAGUAR, THE
Sept, 1961-No. 15, Nov, 1963
Archie Publications (Radio Comics)
1-Origin & 1st app. The Jaguar 31.00 78.00 110.00
2, 3: 2-Last 10¢ issue 16.00 39.00 55.00
4-6: Zaligirl app. 11.00 29.00 40.00
7-10 8.00 20.00 28.00
11-15: 13, 14-Catgirl, Black Hood app. 6.00 16.00 22.00

ADVENTURES ON THE PLANET OF THE APES
Oct, 1975-No. 11, Dec, 1976
Marvel Comics Group
1-r/Planet of the Apes in color; Starlin-c 1.30 2.00 3.00
2-5 0.90 1.40 2.20
6-11: 6-Starlin-c 0.60 1.20 1.80

AKUMA
Sept, 1988-Present (3.50, color, deluxe)
Epic Comics
1 5.30 9.80 15.00
1, 2-2nd printings 1.40 2.60 4.00
2 3.20 5.90 9.00
3-5 2.60 4.90 7.50
6-15 1.90 3.60 5.50
16-33: 17-Begin 3.95-c 1.40 2.60 4.00
34, 35-(4.95-c) 1.00 3.30 5.00

ALBEDO
Apr, 1983-No. 14: Spring, 1989 (B&W)
Thoughts And Images
0-Yellow cover, 50 copies 15.00 34.00 45.00
0-White cover, 450 copies 12.00 26.00 35.00
0-Blue, 1st printing, 500 copies 4.00 8.00 12.00
0-Blue, 2nd printing, 1000 copies 3.00 5.00 8.00
0-3rd print 0.70 1.30 2.00
0-4th print 0.40 0.80 1.20
1-Dark red; 1st app. Usagi Yojimbo 3.20 5.90 9.00
1-Bright red 3.20 5.90 9.00
2 2.10 3.90 6.00
3-14 0.70 1.30 2.00

ALF (TV)
Mar 1988-No 50 Feb 1991 (1.00 color)
Marvel Comics
1-49: 22-X-Men parody 0.40 0.70 1.00
50-(1.75, 52 pgs.)-Photo-c 0.60 1.10 1.75
Annual 1-3 ('88, '89, '90) 0.60 1.10 1.75
Holiday Special 1 (1.75, 68 pgs.) 0.60 1.10 1.75
Holiday Special 2 (1989, 2.00, 68 pgs.) 0.70 1.30 2.00
Spring Special 1 (1989, 1.75) 0.60 1.10 1.75

ALIENS, THE (Captain Johner and,)(Also see Magnus Robot Fighter)
Sept-Dec, 1967, No. 2, May, 1982
Gold Key
1-Reprints from Magnus #1,3,4,6 5.00 10.00 15.00
2-Reprints from Magnus #1 by Manning 1.40 2.60 4.00

ALIENS (Also see Dark Horse Presents #24)
May 1988-No. 6, July, 1989 (1.95, B&W, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-1st appearance Aliens in comics 11.00 25.00 33.00
1-Second printing 3.20 5.90 9.00
1-Third - Sixth printings 0.70 1.30 2.00
2 8.00 18.00 24.00
2-Second printing 1.40 2.60 4.00
2-Third printing 0.70 1.30 2.00
3 4.20 7.80 12.00
4 2.80 5.20 8.00
5, 6 2.10 3.90 6.00
3-6: 2nd printings 0.70 1.30 2.00
ALIENS MINI COMIC 1 (2/89, 4x6") 3.50 6.50 10.00
Aliens Platinum Edition (See Dark Horse Presents..)

ALIENS
V2 #1, Aug, 1989-No. 4, 1990 (2.25, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
V2 #1 4.20 7.80 12.00
V2 #1- 2nd printing ('90, 2.25) 0.80 1.50 2.25
2-4 2.10 3.90 6.00

ALIENS: COLONIAL MARINES
Jan,1993-No. 12, 1993 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-4 0.90 1.60 2.50

ALIENS: EARTH WAR
June, 1990-No 4, Oct, 1990 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-Sam Kieth-a(p) in all 3.50 6.50 10.00
1-2nd print 0.90 1.60 2.50
2 2.80 5.20 8.00
3, 4 2.30 4.20 6.50

ALIENS: GENOCIDE
Nov, 1991-No. 4, Feb, 1992 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-4 0.90 1.60 2.50

ALIENS: HIVE
Feb 1992-No 4 May, 1992 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-4: Kelly Jones-c/a in all 0.90 1.60 2.50

ALIENS/PREDATOR:THE DEADLIEST OF THE SPECIES
July 1993-Present ($2.50,color,mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1 0.90 1.60 2.50

ALIENS: ROGUE
Apr, 1993-No. 4 1993 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-3 0.90 1.60 2.50

ALIENS: SACRIFICE
May, 1993 (4.95, color, one-shot, 52 pgs.)
Dark Horse Comics
ee-Peter Milligan scnpts; painted-c/a 1.80 3.30 5.00

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR (See Dark Horse Presents #36)
June, 1990-No 4, Dec, 1990 (2.50, mini-series, color)
Dark Horse Comics
1 4.20 7.80 12.00
1-2nd printing 0.90 1.60 2.50
0 (July, 1990, 1.95) 5.30 9.80 15.00
2, 3 3.20 5.90 9.00
4 1.80 3.30 5.00

ALIEN 3
June, 1992-No. 3, Aug, 1992 (2.50, color, mini series)
Dark Horse Comics
1-3 0.90 1.60 2.50

ALIEN WORLDS
Dec, 1982-No. 9, Jan, 1985
Pacific Comics/Eclipse
1 0.50 1.00 1.50
2-9: 2, 4-Dave Stevens-c/a 0.40 0.70 1.00
3-D No. 1-Art Adams 1st pub. art 1.10 2.00 3.00

ALL AMERICAN MEN OF WAR
No. 127, Aug-Sept, 1952-No. 117, Sept-Oct, 1966
National Periodical Publications
127 (1952) 126.00 314.00 440.00 H
128 (1952) 86.00 214.00 300.00 H
2 (12-1/52-53) - 5 71.00 179.00 250.00 H
6-10 43.00 107.00 150.00 H
11-18: Last pre-code issue 39.00 99.00 138.00 H
19-29 27.00 68.00 95.00 H
26, 30, 32-Wood-a 30.00 75.00 105.00 H
31, 33-40 21.00 51.00 72.00 H
41-50 19.00 44.00 58.00 H
51-66 15.00 33.00 44.00 H
67-1st app. Gunner & Sarge; series begins 22.00 55.00 77.00 H
68-70 15.00 33.00 44.00 H
71-80 9.00 21.00 28.00 H
81, 83-100: 88-Last 10¢ issue 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
82-Johnny Cloud begins 12.00 26.00 35.00 H
101-117 - Johnny Cloud app. 111,115 & 117 3.90 7.20 11.00 H

ALL-STAR SQUADRON
Sept, 1981-No. 67, Mar, 1987
DC Comics
1-46, 48-67 0.40 0.70 1.00
47-McFarlane-a (1st full story) 1.10 2.00 3.00
Annual 1-3 (11/82-9/84) 0.40 0.70 1.00

ALL-STAR WESTERN (Weird Western Tales #12 on)
Aug-Sept, 1970-No 11, Apr-May, 1972
National Periodical Publications
1 3.50 6.50 10.00 H
2-El Diablo by Morrow begins 1.20 2.30 3.50 H
3-8: 3-Origin El Diablo 1.20 2.30 3.50 H
9-Frazetta a (p), 3 pgs. 1.80 3.30 5.00 H
10-1st app. Jonah Hex 18.00 41.00 55.00 H
11-End app. Jonah Hex 7.00 13.00 20.00 H

ALPHA FLIGHT (See X-Men #120, 121)
Aug, 1983-Present (#52 on are direct sale)
Marvel Comics Group
1-(52 pgs.)-Byrne-c begins 1.10 2.00 3.00
2-12: 12-Double size 0.70 1.30 2.00
13-Wolverine app. 3.50 6.50 10.00
14-16: 16-Wolverine cameo 0.50 1.00 1.50
17-X-Men x-over; Wolverine cameo 2.10 3.90 6.00
18-28: Last Byrne issues 0.50 1.00 1.50
29-32, 35-49 0.40 0.80 1.25
33, 34-Wolverine app. 34-Origin retold 2.50 4.60 7.00
50-Double size 1.00 1.50 2.00
51-Jim Lee's 1st work at Marvel 3.20 5.90 9.00
52, 53: Wolverine app. 1.80 3.30 5.00
54, 63, 64-No Jim Lee art 0.40 0.80 1.25
55-62: Jim Lee art(p) 1.40 2.60 4.00
65-74, 76-86, 74-Wolverine, Spider-Man app. 0.50 1.00 1.50
75-(1.95, 52 pgs.) 0.70 1.30 2.00
87-90: Wolverine app. Jim Lee-c 2.10 3.90 6.00
91-99: 101-105, 107-110, 121-124 0.60 1.10 1.75
100-(2.00 52 pgs.) Avengers app 0.70 1.30 2.00
106-Nortmstar revelation issue 1.80 3.30 5.00
106-2nd printing 0.70 1.30 2.00
120-(2.25)-Polybagged w/poster 0.80 1.50 2.25
Annual 1 ('86, 1.25) 0.60 1.10 1.75
Annual 2-5 ('87, 1.25) 0.40 0.80 1.25
Special V2#1 (6/92, 2.50)-Wolverine-c/s 0.90 1.60 2.50

AMAZING ADULT FANTASY
(Amazing Advs No 1-6 Amazing Fantasy No. 15)
No 7, Dec, 1961-No 14, July, 1962
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)
7-Ditko-c/a in all 64.00 161.00 225.00 H
8-Last 10¢ issue 53.00 132.00 185.00 H
9-13 46.00 114.00 160.00 H
14-Prof. X prototype 51.00 129.00 180.00 H

Adventures of the Jaguar #8 © Archie

Now with three prices! VG VF NM

Amazing Spider-Man #4 © Marvel

AMAZING ADVENTURES (Amazing Adult Fantasy No. 7 on)
June, 1961-No. 8, Nov, 1961
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)

1-Inhumans (by Kirby in 1-4, ends #10)	4.20	7.80	12.00	
2-4	1.80	3.30	5.00	
5-8: H. Adams-a	2.50	4.60	7.00	
9, 10: 9, 10-Magneto app.	1.80	3.30	5.00	
11-New Beast begins, ends #17	3.50	6.50	10.00	H
12-17 13-Brotherhood of Evil Mutants app	2.50	4.60	7.00	H
18-1st app. Kl raven, N. Adams-a	4.20	7.80	12.00	H
19-39	1.20	2.30	3.50	H

AMAZING ADVENTURES
Dec, 1979-No. 14, Jan, 1981
Marvel Comics Group
V2#1-Reprints X-Men 1, 38 1.40 2.60 4.00
2-14: Early X-Men reprints 1.10 2.00 3.00

AMAZING CHAN & THE CHAN CLAN, THE (TV)
May, 1973-No. 4, Feb, 1974 (Hanna-Barbera)

1	3.50	6.50	10.00	
2-4	2.10	3.90	6.00	

AMAZING FANTASY (...Adult Fantasy No. 7-14)
No. 15, Aug, 1962 (Sept. 1962 in indicia)
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)

15-Origin & 1st app. Spider-Man	2,063.00	5,272.00	7,335.00	+ H

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, THE
March, 1963-Present
Marvel Comics Group

1-Origin retold; Ditko-c/a #1-38	1,913.00	5,040.00	7,100.00	+ H
(Golden Records Reprint)	21.00	54.00	75.00	H
(with Golden Records (1966)	43.00	107.00	150.00	H
2-1st app. The Vulture	514.00	1,326.00	1,857.00	+ H
3-1st app. Doc Octopus	286.00	736.00	1,031.00	+ H
4-Origin & 1st app. The Sandman	229.00	589.00	825.00	+ H
5-Dr. Doom app	260.00	500.00	722.00	+ H
6-1st app. Lizard	200.00	500.00	700.00	H
7, 8, 10, 8-Early FF backup story	129.00	321.00	450.00	H
9-Origin & 1st app. Electro	143.00	357.00	500.00	H
11, 12	74.00	186.00	260.00	H
13-1st app. Mysterio	100.00	250.00	350.00	H
14-1st app. the Green Goblin	257.00	643.00	900.00	H
15-1st app. Kraven The Hunter	86.00	214.00	300.00	H
16-1st Daredevil x-over (yellow costume)	60.00	150.00	210.00	H
17-2nd app. Green Goblin (c/s)	107.00	268.00	375.00	H
18-1st app. Ned Leeds (later Hobgoblin)	64.00	161.00	225.00	H
19-Sandman app	53.00	132.00	185.00	H
20-1st app. & origin The Scorpion	64.00	161.00	225.00	H
21-2nd app. The Beetle	43.00	107.00	150.00	H
22-1st app. Princess Python	39.00	96.00	135.00	H
23-2nd app. Green Goblin (C&S)	64.00	161.00	225.00	H
24	38.00	89.00	125.00	H
25-1st app Mary Jane Watson (cameo)	44.00	111.00	155.00	H
26-4th app. Green Goblin	50.00	125.00	175.00	H
27-5th app. Green Goblin	46.00	114.00	160.00	H
28-Origin and 1st app. Molten Man	57.00	143.00	200.00	H
29, 30	33.00	82.00	115.00	H
31-38 -3d Last Ditko issue	26.00	64.00	90.00	H
39-Green Goblin c/s; rd revealed	23.00	82.00	115.00	H
40-Origin Green Goblin (1st time told)	47.00	118.00	165.00	H
41-1st app. Rhino	21.00	54.00	75.00	H
42-3rd app. Mary Jane Watson (11/66)	21.00	54.00	75.00	H
43-49	14.00	36.00	50.00	H
50-Intro Kingpin (7/67)	64.00	161.00	225.00	H
51-2nd app. of Kingpin	26.00	64.00	90.00	H
52-60: 56-Intro Capt. George Stacy	11.00	29.00	40.00	H
61-74: 74-Last 12¢ issue	10.00	24.00	34.00	H
75-89, 91-99: 95, 96 84, 85-Kingpin-c/s	8.00	20.00	28.00	H
90-Death of Capt. Stacy	10.00	24.00	34.00	H
94-Origin retold	13.00	32.00	45.00	H
96-98 Drug books not approved by CCA	17.00	43.00	60.00	H
100-Anniversary issue (9/71)	36.00	89.00	125.00	H
101-Intro/1st app. Morbius, last 15¢ issue	39.00	96.00	135.00	H
101-2nd printing (9/92, silver ink)	0.70	1.30	2.00	H
102-Origin Morbius (52 pgs., 25¢-c)	29.00	71.00	100.00	H
103-118	6.30	11.70	18.00	H
119, 120-Spider-Man vs. Hulk	9.00	21.00	30.00	H
121-Green Goblin kills Gwen Stacy	21.00	54.00	75.00	H
122, Death of Green Goblin	29.00	71.00	100.00	H
123-128	6.30	11.70	18.00	H
129-1st app. The Punisher (2/74)	79.00	196.00	275.00	
130-133 '138-'160 131-Last 20¢ issue	4.20	7.80	12.00	H
134-Punisher cameo app. (2/74)	6.00	15.00	22.00	
135-2nd full Punisher app. (8/74)	19.00	45.00	65.00	
136-Repgp. of Green Goblin (Harry Osborn)	9.00	21.00	30.00	H
137-Green Goblin c/s (Harry Osborn)	5.30	9.80	15.00	H
161-Punisher (cameo)	4.20	7.80	12.00	
162-Punisher, Nightcrawler app	7.70	14.30	22.00	
163-172, 181-190: 181-Origin retold	2.50	4.60	7.00	
174, 175-Punisher app.	6.30	11.70	18.00	
176-180: Green Goblin app.	4.20	7.80	12.00	
191-193, 195-196, 203-208, 210-219	2.10	3.90	6.00	
194-1st Black Cat	4.20	7.80	12.00	
200-Giant-origin issue	6.00	14.00	20.00	
201, 202-Punisher app.	6.00	16.00	22.00	
209-Origin & 1st app. Calypso	2.80	5.20	8.00	
220-237: 225-Foolkiller-c/story (2/82)	2.10	3.90	6.00	
238-1st app. Hobgoblin(w/Fattoxc card)	19.00	45.00	65.00	H
239-Wilfred Tattoxc	7.00	18.00	25.00	
239-1st Hobgoblin/Spidey battle (2nd app.)	10.00	25.00	35.00	
240-243, 246-248	2.10	3.90	6.00	
244-Hobgoblin cameo	3.20	5.90	9.00	
245	4.90	9.10	14.00	
249-251 3-part Hobgoblin/Spidey battle	4.20	7.80	12.00	
252-1st app. black costume for Spidey (5/84)	8.00	19.00	25.00	
253-1st app. The Rose	2.50	4.60	7.00	
254-Jack O'Lantern app.	1.90	3.30	5.00	
255, 263, 264, 266-272, 277-280, 282 283	1.20	2.30	3.50	
256-1st app. Puma	1.40	2.60	4.00	
257-2nd app. Puma; Hobgoblin cameo	3.20	5.90	9.00	
258-Hobgoblin app. (minor)	4.20	7.80	12.00	
259-Full Hobgoblin app.	4.90	9.10	14.00	
260-Hobgoblin-s	3.20	5.90	9.00	
261-Hobgoblin battles Jack O'Lantern	3.50	6.50	10.00	
284-Punisher cameo app	3.20	5.90	9.00	
285-Punisher app.; mirror Hobgoblin app	6.30	11.70	18.00	
286-Hobgoblin-c/app. (mirror)	2.10	3.90	6.00	
287-Hobgoblin app. (mirror)	2.10	3.90	6.00	
288-Hobgoblin full app.	2.80	5.20	8.00	
289-(1.25, 52 pgs.)-Death of Ned Leeds	7.00	17.00	22.00	H
290-292	1.60	2.90	4.50	
293, 294-Parts 2 & 5 of Kraven story	2.80	5.20	8.00	
295-297	1.90	3.60	5.50	
298-McFarlane-c/a begins; 1st app. Venom	12.00	25.00	35.00	H
299-McFarlane-a	7.60	13.00	20.00	H
300-(52 pgs.)-1st full Venom story	19.30	35.80	55.00	H
301-305	5.30	9.80	15.00	
306-311, 313, 314	3.50	6.50	10.00	
312-Hobgoblin battles Green Goblin	7.60	13.00	20.00	
315-317: Venom app.	6.20	11.50	17.75	H
318-323, 325, 326-Biweekly begins	2.50	4.60	7.00	
324-Sabretooth app., McFarlane-c (no art)	4.20	7.80	12.00	
326, 327 329-No McFarlane	1.20	2.30	3.50	
328-Hulk app., last McFarlane-a	3.50	6.50	10.00	
330, 331: Punisher app.	1.40	2.60	4.00	
332, 333-Venom-c/s	2.60	4.90	7.50	H
334-336, 338-343	0.90	1.60	2.50	
337-Hobgoblin app.	1.20	2.30	3.50	
344-1st app. Cletus Kasady (Carnage)	3.00	5.50	8.50	H
345-1st full app. Cletus Kasady	4.00	7.50	11.50	H
346, 347-Venom app.	3.30	6.20	9.50	H
348, 349, 351-359	0.40	0.80	1.25	H
350-(1.50, 52 pgs.)	1.10	2.00	3.00	
360-Carnage cameo	2.50	4.60	7.00	H
361-Carnage	5.30	9.80	15.00	
361-2nd printing (1.25-c)	0.70	1.30	2.00	
362, 363 Carnage & Venom-c/s	2.70	5.00	7.75	H
362-2nd printing	0.50	1.00	1.50	
364, 366-374, 376-381	0.40	0.80	1.25	H
365 (3.95)-Hologram-c, pull-out poster	2.10	3.90	6.00	H
375-(3.95)-Holo-grafx-c, Vs. Venom-c/s	1.90	3.60	5.50	H
Annual 1-('64)-1st Sinester Six	80.00	200.00	280.00	H
Annual 2-('65)-New Doctor Strange story	29.00	71.00	100.00	
Special 3-(11/66)-Avengers vs Hulk x-over	11.00	27.00	38.00	
Special 4-(11/67)-Spidey Vs. Human Torch	13.00	32.00	45.00	H
Special 5-('11.'68)-Peter Parker's parents	14.00	35.00	50.00	H
Special 6-(11/69)-New Sinester Six story	6.30	11.70	18.00	H
Special 7-('12/70)-All reprints	6.30	11.70	18.00	H
Special 8-('12/71)	6.30	11.70	18.00	H
King Size 9-('1973)-r/Spec. Spider-Man mag	6.30	11.70	18.00	H
Annual 10, 11, 12 ('1976-78)	2.50	4.60	7.00	
Annual 13-('79)-John Byrne-a	2.80	5.20	8.00	
Annual 14-('80)-Miller-c/a	3.20	5.90	9.00	
Annual 15-('81)-Punisher app., Miller-c/a	7.70	14.30	22.00	
Annual 16-20 (1982-86)	2.10	3.90	6.00	
Annual 21-(1987)-Wedding issue	2.80	5.20	8.00	
Annual 22-('88)-Evolutionary War	2.80	5.20	8.00	
Annual 23-('89)-Atlantis Attacks, Liefeld-p	2.10	3.90	6.00	
Annual 24-('90, 2.00)	1.20	2.30	3.50	
Annual 25-('91, 2.50)-1st solo Venom story	2.80	5.20	8.00	H
Annual 26-('92, 2.25)-New Warriors-c/story	1.80	3.30	5.00	H
Annual 27-('93, 2.95)-Polybagged w/card	1.10	2.00	3.00	
Skating On Thn Ice 1-(1.25 Canadian 1990)	1.40	2.60	4.00	
1-(1.50-c, American, 2/93)	0.50	1.00	1.50	
Double Trouble 2-(1.25 Canadian, 1990)	1.10	2.00	3.00	
2-(1.50, American, 2/93)	0.50	1.00	1.50	
Wild And Reckless 3-(1.25 Canadian, 1990)	1.10	2.00	3.00	
3-(1.50, American, 2/93)	0.50	1.00	1.50	
Chaos in Calgary 4-(1.50, American, 2/93)	0.50	1.00	1.50	
Giant Size 1-8. See Giant-Size listing				
Giveaway: See Overstreet Price Guide listings				

AMERICAN, THE
July, 1987-No. 9, 1988 (1.75, B&W)
Dark Horse Comics

1-(1.50)	1.80	3.30	5.00
2	1.20	2.30	3.50
3-5	0.90	1.60	2.50
6-9	0.60	1.10	1.75
American Collection (B&W, 5.95)	2.10	3.90	6.00
Special 1 ('90, 2.25)	0.80	1.50	2.25

AMERICA'S BEST TV COMICS
1967 (Giant Size, 68 pgs., 25 cent one shot)
American Broadcasting Company
1-Fantastic Four, Casper Amazing Spidey 11.00 29.00 40.00

ANGEL AND THE APE (Becomes Meet Angel)
Nov-Dec, 1968-No. 6 Sept-Oct, 1969
National Periodical Publications
Showcase 77 (11-12/67)-1st app. Angel/Ape 10.00 23.00 30.00
1-(11-12/68) 7.00 13.00 20.00
2-6 4.20 7.80 12.00

ANIMAL MAN (See Strange Adventures 180 for 1st app.)
Sept, 1988-Present (Copri)
DC Comics

1-Bolland-c on all	5.30	9.80	15.00	
2	3.50	6.50	10.00	
3, 4	2.10	3.90	6.00	
5-10: 6-Invasion tie-in	1.40	2.60	4.00	
11-20	1.10	2.00	3.00	
21-26: 26-Last Grant Morrison scripts	0.90	1.60	2.50	
27-49, 51-55, 57-59	0.60	1.10	1.75	
50-(2.95, 52 pgs.)-Last issue by Tom Veitch	1.10	2.00	3.00	
56-(2.50, 68 pgs.)	1.20	2.30	3.50	
60-62: 60-Begin 1.95-c	0.70	1.30	2.00	

Overstreet's Comic Book Price Guide

ANTHRO
July-Aug. 1968 - No. 6, July-Aug. 1969
National Periodical Publications
Showcase 74 (5-6/67)-1st app. Anthro 14.00 32.00 42.00 H
1-(7-8/68) 10.50 19.50 30.00
2-6 5.60 10.40 16.00

ANYTHING GOES
Oct. 1986-No. 6, 1987 (Mini-series)
Fantagraphics Books
1-Flaming Carrot app. 1.10 2.00 3.00
2-4, 6 0.70 1.30 2.00
5-TMNT app., 2nd time in color 1.10 2.00 3.00

APPLESEED
Sept. 1988-Book IV #4, Aug. 1991 (B&W)
Eclipse International
1 4.20 7.80 12.00
2-4 1.10 2.00 3.00
Book II. 1-5 (7/89) 1.00 1.80 2.75
Book III Vol. 1-4 1.00 1.80 2.75
Book III Vol. 5 (3.50-c) 1.20 2.30 3.50
Book IV #1-4 (1/91- 9/91, 3.50-c) 1.20 2.30 3.50

AQUAMAN
Jan Feb, 1962-No. 63, Aug-Sept. 1978
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics
Showcase 30 (1-2/61)-Origin S.A. Aquaman 89.00 268.00 490.00 H
Showcase 31 50.00 150.00 225.00 H
Showcase 32 50.00 150.00 225.00 H
Showcase 33 62.00 187.00 280.00
1-(1-2/62)-Intro Quisp 62.00 187.00 280.00
2 34.00 86.00 120.00
3-5 24.00 61.00 85.00
6-10: 9-Sea Devils app 20.00 45.00 60.00
11-20 15.00 34.00 45.00
21-32, 34-40 9.00 21.00 28.00
33-Intro Aqua-Girl (see Adv. 266) 13.00 30.00 40.00
41-47, 49 4.20 7.80 12.00
48-Origin reprinted 5.60 10.40 16.00
50-52: Deadman by N. Adams 7.00 17.00 22.00
53-56: 56-(3-4/71) 2.50 4.60 7.00
57-63: 57-(8/77). 58-Origin retold 1.60 2.90 4.50

AQUAMAN
Feb. 1986-No. 4 May, 1986 (Mini series)
DC Comics
1 1.40 2.60 4.00
2-4 0.90 1.60 2.50
Special 1 (`86, 1.50) 0.70 1.30 2.00

AQUAMAN
Dec. 1991-No. 13, Dec. 1992 (1.00/1.25 color)
DC Comics
1-5: (1.00) 0.40 0.70 1.00
6-13: (1.25) 0.40 0.80 1.25

ARCHIE & ARMSTRONG
July (June misdt). 1992-Present (2.50 color)
Valiant Comics
0-(7/92)-Barry Smith-c/a 5.30 9.80 15.00
0-(Gold Logo) 29.00 71.00 100.00
1-(9/92)-Frank Miller-c; Smith/Layton-a 2.80 4.90 7.50
2-2nd app. Tivok (c/s) 3.20 5.90 9.00
3, 4 1.80 3.30 5.00
5-7 1.20 2.30 3.50
8-(4 50, 52 pgs) 1.60 2.90 4.50
9-14: 10-2nd app. Ivar, 10.11-Smith-c 0.80 1.50 2.25

ARCHIE AS PURE HEART THE POWERFUL
(Also see Jughead as Captain Hero)
Sept. 1966-No. 6, Nov. 1967
Archie Publications (Radio Comics)
1-Super-hero parody 14.00 36.00 50.00
2 10.00 23.00 30.00
3-6 7.00 15.00 20.00

ARCOMICS PREMIERE
July, 1993-Present (2.95, color)
Arcomics
1-1st limited-c comic 1.10 2.00 3.00

ARMAGEDDON 2001
May 1991 - No. 2 Oct. 1991 (2.00, 68 pgs.)
DC Comics
1-Intro Waverider 1.40 2.60 4.00
1-2nd & 3rd printings 0.70 1.30 2.00
2 0.80 1.60 2.50

ARRGH!
Dec. 1974-No. 5, Sept. 1975
Marvel Comics Group
1-Satire 1.40 2.60 4.00
2-5 0.70 1.30 2.00

ASTONISHING TALES
Aug. 1970-No. 36, July 1976
Marvel Comics Group
1-Dr. Doom begins, also Ka-Zar by Kirby 7.00 13.00 20.00
2-Kraven the Hunter-c/s 3.50 6.50 10.00
3-6: Smith-a 6.30 11.70 18.00
7, 8-Last Kirby issue; last Dr. Doom 3.50 6.50 10.00
9-Lorna-r 1.40 2.60 4.00
10-Smith/Sal Buscema-a 2.80 5.20 8.00
11-Origin Ka-Zar 2.50 4.60 7.00
12-Man Thing by Adams 2.50 4.60 7.00
13-24: 19-Starlin-a(p) 0.80 1.60 2.50
25-1st app. Deathlok The Demolisher 21.00 54.00 75.00
26-28, 30: Deathlok-c/s in s/l 8.00 19.00 25.00
29-No Deathlok-c, Guardians-c/s 8.00 19.00 25.00
31-36: Deathlok-c/s 5.30 9.80 15.00

ASTRO BOY
Aug, 1965 (One-shot, TV)
Gold Key
1 (10151-508)-Scarce 64.00 161.00 225.00

ATOM, THE (& the Hawkman No. 39 on)
June-July, 1962-No. 38 Aug-Sept. 1968
National Periodical Publications
Showcase 34-Origin & 1st app. S.A. Atom 220.00 610.00 875.00 H
Showcase 35-2nd app. Atom by Gil Kane 130.00 340.00 485.00 H
Showcase 36-3rd app. Atom by Kane 100.00 250.00 400.00 H
1-(6-7/62) 157.00 393.00 550.00
2 57.00 143.00 200.00
3-1st Time Pool story 41.00 104.00 145.00
4, 5 24.00 61.00 85.00
6, 8-10: 8-JLA x-over 21.00 54.00 75.00
7-1st Atom & Hawkman team-up 43.00 112.00 160.00
11-15 17.00 38.00 50.00
16-20 11.00 24.00 32.00
21-28, 30 7.00 17.00 22.00
29-1st solo G.A. Atom app. in S.A. 24.00 61.00 85.00
31-35, 37, 38 7.00 17.00 22.00
36-G.A. Atom x-over 9.00 21.00 28.00

ATOM AND THE HAWKMAN
No. 39: Oct-Nov, 1968-No. 45, Oct-Nov, 1969
National Periodical Publications
39-45: 43-Last 12¢ issue 7.90 14.60 22.50

ATOM ANT (TV)
Jan, 1966 (Hanna-Barbera)
Gold Key
1 (10170-601) 29.00 71.00 100.00

ATOM SPECIAL
1993 (2.50, color, 68 pgs.)
DC Comics
1 0.90 1.60 2.50

AUGIE DOGGIE (TV)
Oct. 1963 (Hanna-Barbera)
Gold Key
1 20.00 45.00 60.00

AVENGERS, THE (Also see Giant-Size)
Sept. 1963-Present
Marvel Comics Group
1-Origin & 1st app. The Avengers 357.00 912.00 1,290.00
2-Hulk leaves 114.00 286.00 412.00
3-Sub-Mariner & Hulk battle Avengers 71.00 179.00 258.00
4-1st SA app. Capt. America, 1st SA Backy 207.00 529.00 748.00
4 (1966 Golden Records reprint) 18.00 41.00 55.00
with Golden Records (1966) 29.00 71.00 100.00
5-Hulk app. 43.00 107.00 150.00
6-8 34.00 86.00 120.00
9-Intro Wonder Man who dies in same story 37.00 93.00 130.00
10 31.00 79.00 110.00
11-Spider-Man-c & x-over 37.00 93.00 130.00
12-16, 18-New Avengers line-up 21.00 54.00 75.00
17-19 18.00 41.00 55.00
20-22 Wood inks 12.00 26.00 35.00
23-30: 28-Giant-Man becomes Goliath 9.00 19.00 25.00
31-40 6.30 11.70 18.00
41-52: 54-56: 46-Re-intro Ant-Man. 4.90 9.10 14.00
53-X-Men app. 6.30 11.70 18.00
57-Intro The Vision 15.00 34.00 45.00
58-Origin The Vision 10.00 23.00 30.00
59-65: 65-Last 12¢ issue 5.60 10.40 16.00
66, 67-Smith-a 5.90 8.50 15.00
68-70 3.50 6.50 10.00
71-1st Invaders, Black Knight joins 6.10 11.40 17.50
72-82, 84-86, 88-91 3.20 5.90 9.00
83-Intro The Liberators 3.50 6.50 10.00
87-Origin Black Panther 7.00 13.00 20.00
92-Adams-c; last 15¢-c 3.90 7.20 11.00
93-Adams-c/a (52 pgs.) 12.00 28.00 40.00
94-96: Adams-c/a 9.00 20.00 28.00
97 3.90 7.20 11.00
98-Smith-c/a; Goliath becomes Hawkeye 7.00 17.00 22.00
99-Smith-c/a 7.00 17.00 22.00
100-Smith-c/a; featuring every Avenger ever 17.00 38.00 50.00
101-106, 108, 109 2.50 4.60 7.00
107-Starlin-a 3.50 6.50 10.00
110, 111-X-Men app. 5.30 9.80 15.00
112-1st app. The Mantis 3.50 6.50 10.00
113-124, 126-130: 116-118. Silver Surfer app. 2.10 3.90 6.00
125-Thanos-c & brief app. (7/74) 5.30 9.80 15.00
131-140, 134, 135-Trial origin Vision 1.80 3.30 5.00
141-163: 150-Kirby art; new line up begins 1.40 2.60 4.00
164-166: Byrne-a 1.80 3.30 5.00
167-191: 181-191 Byrne-a 1.10 2.00 3.00
192-213: 215-262: 200, 250-Double size 0.70 1.30 2.00
214-Ghost Rider-c/a 1.80 3.30 5.00
263-1st app. X-Factor 1.80 3.30 5.00
264-299: 272-Alpha Flight app 0.50 1.00 1.50
300-(1.75, 68 pgs.) 0.90 1.60 2.50
301-304: 302-Intro Dusaar 0.40 1.00 1.00
305-Byrne scripts begin 0.70 1.30 2.00
306-325: 327, 329-343, 317-Spidey x-over 0.40 0.70 1.00
326-1st app. Rage 2.80 5.20 8.00
328-Origin Rage 2.50 4.60 7.00
344-346, 348, 349, 351-359, 361, 362, 364, 365 0.40 0.80 1.25
347-(1.75, 56 pgs.) 0.60 1.10 1.75
360-(2.50)-Double gatefold-c. flip-book 0.90 1.60 2.50
360-(2.95)-Embossed foil-c, 30th anv. issue 1.80 3.30 5.00
363-(2.95, 52 pgs.)-All silver foil-c 1.10 2.00 3.00
366-(3.95, 68 pgs.)-Embossed gold foil-c 1.80 3.30 5.00
Special 1 (9/67)-New art 12.00 26.00 35.00
Special 2 (9/68)-New art 4.20 7.80 12.00
Special 3 (9/69)-#14 & 3 new Kirby stories 5.30 9.80 15.00
Special 4 (1/71)-Kirby-r/#5, 6 2.10 3.90 6.00
Special 5 (1/72)-Spidey x-over 2.10 3.90 6.00
Annual 6 (11/76) 1.80 3.30 5.00
Annual 7 (11/77)-Thanos app 9.00 21.00 28.00
Annual 8 (`78) 1.60 2.90 4.50
Annual 9 (`79) 1.20 2.30 3.50
Annual 10 (`81)-1st app. Rogue 2.80 5.20 8.00
Annual 11-16 (1982-87) 1.20 2.30 3.50
Annual 17 (`88)-Evolutionary War 1.40 2.60 4.00
Annual 18 (`89, 2.00) 1.10 2.00 3.00

Aquaman #1
© DC

Are They A Good Investment?

CBM Surveys its advisors to determine the average buying and selling (wholesale and retail) prices of 40 miscellaneous comic books (in specific grades) from a range of different publishing eras.

The relationship (ratio) between the buy and sell price is the "Buy-Back" percentage, and is considered by experienced collectors to be one of the best investment indicators.

Although there are certainly exceptions, generally speaking, the higher the Buy-Back percentage the better the investment.

Less than 33% = low yield investment.
33-66% = medium
Above 66% = high.

*Also highlighted is the comic with the highest Buy-Back percentage of this group. ■

	Title & Issue Number	Avg. Buy Price	Avg Retail Price	Avg Buy Back %
1	All-Flash Quarterly #1 FN65	$864.17	$1,946.67	44.39%
2	Archie Annual #1 FN65	$135.13	$333.16	40.56%
3	Detective Comics #28 FN65	$1,472.11	$2,984.21	49.33%
4	Double Action Comics #2 FN65	$1,861.76	$4,592.65	40.54%
5	Four Color #424 (Flash Gordon) FN65	$7.95	$22.03	36.09%
6	Frontline Combat #10 FN65	$16.58	$40.68	40.76%
7	Pep Comics #1 FN65	$519.21	$1,220.79	42.53%
8	Shield-Wizard Comics #1 FN65	$208.42	$522.63	39.88%
9	Thunda #1 FN65	$103.16	$250.53	41.18%
10	Whiz Comics #3 FN65	$338.33	$768.06	44.05%
11	Aquaman #1 VF82	$93.91	$197.04	47.66%
12	Barbie and Ken #1 VF82	$62.50	$147.86	42.27%
13	Brave & Bold #23 VF82	$64.31	$141.40	45.48%
14	Captain America #109 VF82	$16.47	$38.59	42.68%
15	Donald Duck #26 VF82	$44.21	$120.26	36.76%
16	Four Color #920 (Zorro) VF82	$16.66	$48.19	34.57%
17	Frontier Fighters #2 VF82	$43.00	$116.50	36.91%
18	GI Combat #136 VF82	$2.80	$7.35	38.10%
19	Green Hornet #1 (Gold Key) VF82	$39.04	$89.30	43.72%
20	Green Lantern #59 VF82	$44.31	$108.04	41.01%
21	Hawkman #1 VF82	$118.86	$255.45	46.53%
22	Justice League of America #9 VF82	$83.04	$180.63	45.97%
23	New Gods #1 (1971) VF82	$8.95	$23.02	38.88%
24	Showcase #23 VF82	$318.40	$635.86	50.07%
25	Superman #170 VF82	$7.54	$18.72	40.28%
26	Tales of Suspense #40 VF82	$276.36	$594.09	46.52%
27	Two-Gun Kid #84 VF82	$1.01	$3.01	33.55%
28	Uncle Scrooge #14 VF82	$15.79	$46.42	34.02%
29	X-Men #2 VF82	$251.74	$583.26	43.16%
30	Batman #497 NM94	$3.77	$8.60	43.84%
31	Bloodshot #6 NM94	$3.22	$6.98	46.13%
32	Predator vs. Magnus (platinum) NM94	$18.82	$54.70	34.41%
33	Sandman #1 (1989) NM94	$19.60	$43.00	45.58%
34	Savage Dragon #1 (1st) NM94	$2.34	$5.38	43.49%
35	Secret City #0 NM94	$1.51	$4.91	30.75%
36	Spawn #10 NM94	$0.96	$2.34	41.03%
37	Spider-Man (platinum) NM94	$108.15	$277.63	38.95%
38	Terminator (Now-1988) NM94	$5.62	$16.22	34.65%
39	Trial of Venom (UNICEF) NM94	$5.46	$12.40	44.03%
40	Turok #1 NM94	$1.44	$4.33	33.26%

CBM advisors suggest marketplace movers and shakers to keep your eye on!

PRE - 1950

1. Action #1
Still holding it's #1 spot!

2. All Star #36
Batman & Superman as JSA Guests!

3. Captain Marvel Jr #1
Mac Raboy's Freddy Freeman fast becoming a high demand Fawcett collectible!

4. Batman #2
In the higher grades, looking very attractive compared to the previous issue!

5. Captain America #1
Timely 1st issue, Red Skull, 1941... means High demand!

6. Detective #33
The Dark Knight's origin!

7. Suspense Comics #3
Collectors offering many multiples of Guide... where are the copies?!

8. More Fun #55
Dr. Fates First!

9. Jumbo #1
Oversized, hard to find, 1930s book!

10. Superman #1
Does a Near Mint, unrestored copy exist?

1950 - 69

1. Adventure #256
Origin Green Arrow

2. Amazing Fantasy #15
Since the Sotheby's Auction, this one's in the limelight!

3. Avengers #4
Cap is back to join up!

4. Magnus #1 (Gold Key)
Silver collectors are clamoring for this one!

5. Mighty Sampson #1 (GK)
Obscure and still low priced!

6. Doctor Solar (GK)
See #4 above!

7. Turok #30 (GK)
1st GK issue is hard to find!

8. Strange Tales #110
Ditko's hero is still awesome to behold!

9. Daredevil #1
He was down for a while, now he's back with a vengence!

10. Fantastic Four #1
See #2 above!

1970 - 85

1. All Star Western #10
Jonah Hex is moving up!

2. New Gods #1
Kirby at his finest!

3. Giant Size X-Men #1
New X-Men and Wolverine!

4. Jimmy Olsen #133-34
Toughest books of Kirby's fourth world!

5. Iron Fist #14
Still snarling his way to the top!

6. Batman #232
Ras Al Ghul is Cool!

7. Incredible Hulk #181
Wolverine! 'Nuff said!

8. Tomb of Dracula #1
Baby boomers are saying, "Fangs for the memories!"

9. X-Men #94
The new X-Men are older than you think!

10. Conan #1
After all these years, it's finally on the move By Crom!

1986 - PRESENT

1. Spiderman #300
Venom, Venom, Venom!

2. Azrael #1 - #4
The New Batman!

3. Plasm #0
Betcha won't miss another Diamond Previews!

4. Ren & Stimpy #1
Happy, Happy, Joy, Joy!

5. Jurassic Park #1 & #2
Demand growing faster than a velociraptor!

6. Spawn #5
Todd's books are great month after month!

7. Prime #1
Ultraverse super spectacular!

8. Solar #14 & #15
Valiant's shining star!

9. Sandman #8
Ultra high quality

10. Showcase '93 #6
Star Spangled #65 revisited!

Keep Your Eye On...

CBM MarketWatch

UPPER DECK AND VALIANT ENTER A NEW UNIVERSE

On July 21, the Upper Deck Company, through its new Pyramid brand, launched "The Valiant Era, a Trading Card History of the Valiant Universe Through 1992".

This set will consist of 120 cards, 118 covers from all Valiant books issued between May 1991 and December 1992 and two checklist cards.

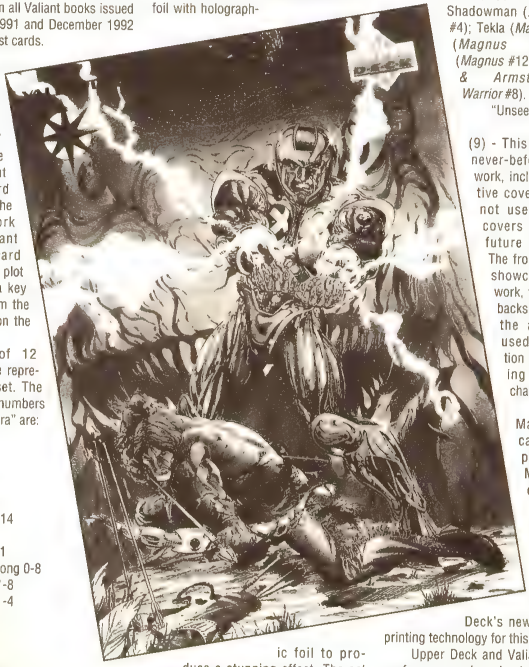
Each card in the set features a full-bleed design with a high-gloss, UV coating on the card both front and back. Card fronts feature the original artwork from the Valiant cover, while card backs include a plot synopsis and a key piece of art from the issue pictured on the card front.

A total of 12 Valiant titles are represented in the set. The titles and issue numbers in "The Valiant Era" are:

Magnus 0-22
Solar 1-19
Harbinger 0-15
X-O Manowar 1-14
Rai 0-8
Shadowman 1-11
Archer & Armstrong 0-8
Eternal Warrior 1-8
H.A.R.D. Corps 1-4
Bloodshot 1-2
Unity 0-1
Harbinger 1
Trade Paperback

In addition, a number of special insert cards will be included in random packs. The insert cards (which will include special printing techniques "never before seen on trading cards") are:

"First Appearances" (9) - These cards will be printed utilizing new technology developed by Upper Deck called "Light F/X", which combines silver foil with holographic foil to produce a stunning effect. The set includes new original artwork of major Valiant heroes and villains. Card fronts feature the original artwork, plus the cover of the book with the first appearance as an inset.



Card backs include a description of the characters significance in the Valiant universe. The set consists of Harada (*Solar* #3); Master Darque (*Shadowman* #8); H.A.R.D. Corps (*Harbinger* #10); Bloodshot (*Rai* #0); Shadowman (*X-O Manowar* #4); Tekla (*Magnus* #3); Rai (*Magnus* #5); Turok (*Magnus* #12); and (*Archer & Armstrong/Eternal Warrior* #8).

"Unseen Art"

(9) - This set includes never-before-seen artwork, including alternative covers that were not used, and even covers planned for future publication! The front of the card showcases the artwork, while the card backs explains why the art was not used or information about upcoming books or characters.

X - O Manowar "SP" card (1) - A portrait of X-O Manowar, produced by renowned artist Joe Quesada, will be combined with the Upper Deck's new "Light F/X" printing technology for this special card.

Upper Deck and Valiant will team up for a second card set in September as part of the "Deathmate" crossover project between Valiant and Image Comics. ■

By Michael Allen

THE COMIC TRADER
P.O. BOX 1203
SEGUIN, TEXAS 78156 1203

The Comic Trader is a monthly newsletter bringing individual buyers and sellers of comic books together. This newsletter is filled with comics for sale and comics wanted by collectors.

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Introduction

Welcome to the Overstreet Trading Card Price Guide, a regular feature of Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly. CBM will keep you current on all of the hottest comic and media related cards in the "Marketplace"... as well as those newly introduced! You can depend on the Overstreet Card Guide to provide accurate values for current non-sports cards. That's because the prices shown here are averages of genuine dealer retail prices, not estimates! The pricing information is compiled from data supplied by our **Board Of Advisors** (listed at the beginning of the trading card section). You will note that this compilation lists prices for card sets, singles, specialty cards, and even unopened boxes when warranted. We have not itemized every card single, per the opinions of our advisors. We concur with their view... namely that most cards are assigned an average price for all cards in that set. Where single card prices do differ (e.g. specialty cards), card prices are listed separately. Prices often vary on certain individual cards within a set. As most collectors know, this is due to the popularity of a specific character, regionally specific market pressures, and/or the pressures of simple supply and demand. Collectors should take this into consideration when pricing cards.

All suggestions and criticism are welcome and your input is important to us! If you'd like to lend a hand in making the Overstreet Card Price Guide the most reliable card price guide ever published, send your comments to: Overstreet Publications, P.O. Box 2610, Cleveland, TN 37320 or FAX us at (615) 479-8156.

The whole idea of collecting cards is, first and foremost, to have FUN! Card collecting is, after all, a hobby. The problems start when new collectors forget this most basic principle.

When an attempt is made to turn the hobby into a "Get-rich-quick" scheme, financial "disaster" is always close behind. People who get into card collecting exclusively for monetary reasons almost always loose in the long run.

Non-sport cards have been around for a long time, longer even than comic books or comic strips. In fact, cards were issued as far back as the Civil War era. For the most part, this Price Guide deals with non-sports cards from the mid 1960s to the present. This is what most collectors are primarily interested in. Overstreet Publications projects that if interest in new cards continues to increase at present rates, demand for older pre 1960s cards will escalate as well. With each issue of Overstreet's CBM, new information and prices will be added. If you have trading card data and information, please send it to us. Card Data, Overstreet Publications, P. O. Box 2610, Cleveland, TN 37320 (or FAX us at (615) 479-8156. All new data and corrections to existing data is much appreciated!

HOW DO I START COLLECTING CARDS?

(1) First, collect cards that you enjoy!

(2) Set a budget for yourself and keep within that budget. The wonderful thing about collecting trading cards is there are so many varieties to choose from. There have been so many different card sets published over the past thirty years that is is relatively easy to find some that you like and fits into your budget.

WHERE CAN I GET CARDS?

There are several different places to acquire non-sports cards:

(1) Comic book and Sports card retailers. In most cases, they carry many of the recently released non-sports cards.

(2) Local swap meets and flea markets.

(3) Many cities hold monthly sports card and non-sports card shows and conventions.

(4) Mail order dealers.

Because the overhead costs associated with selling at a card show or swap meet are lower than at a regular retail store, a collector may find some material at lower prices. Another factor to consider is the element of competition Dealers who set up at swap meets and card conventions often experience greater competition than shops, and therefore sometimes offer lower prices in order to more successfully compete

The advantage of shopping at a retail store is that they usually have a better assortment of non-sports cards sets and chase cards. Many retail stores will also hold cards or put them on a lay-away plan for regular customers. These services are less likely to be offered by swap meet or card show dealers. Not only that, but shops have greater accessibility because of regular hours.

Usually collectors take advantage of both sources.

HOW DO I BUY, SELL, & TRADE CARDS?

Buying - Buying cards is not an exact science. Prices can vary from dealer to dealer. The best thing to do is to shop around until you find a dealer that you are comfortable with and can trust.

Never be afraid to bargain on the price of a card or set of cards. The worst thing that can happen is that the dealer will say no. In many cases, a dealer may make a counter offer which is lower than their original asking price.

This principle applies to both retail stores as well as convention dealers.

It is important to remember though, that the retail stores have more bills to pay (higher overhead), so don't be disappointed if you are not always successful with your offer. If you don't feel comfortable with a price, just say "thanks" and try another location.

Trading - Trading non-sports cards with other collectors can be as fun as trading sports cards. When trading, it's seems to work well to trade "retail for retail". In other words, if you have a set of cards worth twenty dollars in the Overstreet Price Guide, trade for cards worth the same amount. Other factors can come into play that can change or otherwise affect this rule, but, for the most part, it's a good way to develop your trading skills.

Trading cards with a dealer can be a little more complicated. Usually, dealers will trade for about fifty to sixty percent of the value of the card or set of cards. For example, if a card set is retailing for ten dollars, the dealer may offer a trade value of five or six dollars for that set. Think about your deal ahead of time and remember your right to say no if you don't like the deal, just the way dealers have a right to say no when they don't like a trade that's being offered. And don't forget the option of making a counter offer. Often the price that is finally agreed to is somewhere inbetween the your ideal price and the dealer's ideal price!

Selling - The best way to sell cards is by attending card conventions as a dealer. If selling at a card convention is not your cup of tea then you can sell cards to a dealer. Selling cards to dealers will get you from twenty to fifty percent of the card or card sets value. That twenty dollar card set is worth ten to a dealer TOPS. It's always best to try and trade instead of out right sell a card. You will get more value out of the cards that way.

HOW DO I PROTECT & STORE MY CARDS!

Like comic books, it is important to store cards in a protective environment. Cards can be damaged by the same things that can damage comic books. With this in mind, remember to

store your cards in a cool dry place.

Cards can fade and turn yellow or brown if exposed to sunlight and certain types of fluorescent lights. Store cards out of the light.

To keep cards from bending or getting rounded corners, place them into plastic, non-acid, "nine-card-sheets". 100, 200, 500, and 1000 count cardboard boxes or plastic cases are also a good way to store large quantities of cards and are less expensive than plastic sheets. These are available at any sports card shop.

THE "CHASE" IS ON!

Up until recently, the non-sports card industry has been fairly "low profile". In general, over the past thirty years, the subject matter for non-sports and entertainment cards has been primarily based upon the television and movie industry. These cards featured actual scenes from the TV show or movie. The card buyer had only one thing to collect, so card collecting wasn't very difficult.

In the 1970s, an added bonus was added to each pack of cards; a sticker. This marketing strategy was designed to motivate the unsuspecting card buyer to purchase more packs, because now there are two sets that need completing; complete a set of cards and complete a set of stickers. This wasn't difficult because every pack of cards had at least one sticker. Eventually the card buyer would get enough cards to complete the set.

This continued until Impel and Upper Deck did something to revolutionize the non-sports industry. They included, for the first time, a special card found only in a few of the packs. The card was a hologram and is now called the "chase" card. These "chase" cards were different, special, *and* harder to get. Their inclusion into selected packs of cards very successfully inspired card buyers to veritable purchasing frenzies.

Because these chase cards were availabele in such low numbers, the prices of the cards escalated to much higher values than ordinary cards... much higher!

No longer did the average card buyer purchase a pack to put a set together. Instead they purchased packs to try and find the Chase card. In fact, making sets of cards became a byproduct of card acquisition while trying to get all the Chase cards became a primary collecting goal

GRADING AND PRICING CARDS

Grading and pricing cards is much like grading and pricing comic books. Some elements of value are:

(1) Condition - The higher the better.

(2) Subject Matter - The more popular the more in demand and the more in demand the higher the value

(3) Quantity Printed - Limited print runs means less cards to go around.

(4) Age - Older cards are generally harder to find and therefore more valuabel.

The condition of a card is among the most important factor in determining the price, but it is in no way absolute. For example, a card in a lower grade that is popular and hard to find can, and many times will, command a higher price than what is listed in a price guide, whereas, a mint set of an unpopular card could be worth less than the price listed. It is up to you, as the collector, to determine the price you are willing to pay for a given card or set.

Remember that grading is not an exact science and the grading scale below should be used as a starting point. Older cards prior to 1970 can be adjusted upwards 5%-10% if they are in excellent condition or higher.

Grades

Mint (MT) - A card with no defects whatsoever. All corners are sharp, the color is vibrant with the original gloss. No printing defects such as off centering o color should be visible. Card should be sharp and in focus. 100%

Near Mint (NM) - A card with any one of the following minor flaws: a corner with slight wear, slightly off centered. No color loss or yellowing should be visible. Can have a very minor focus imperfection. 75%-95%

Excellent (EX) - A card with any two of the following minor flaws: slight wear on a corner, slight off centering, the original gloss is diminished, very slight focus imperfection. 50%-75%.

Very Good (VG) - A card in this condition may have gloss loss, some yellowing of the borders may be visible, rounding at the corners, pictures can be slightly off focus. 20%-50%

Good (GD) - A card in this condition can have scuffing at the corners and on the face, boarders can be uneven and yellowing of the boarders is apparent, glossiness is no longer noticeable. 10%-20%

Fair (FR), Poor (PR) - Cards in this condition are usually used for fillers until a better condition card can be found. These cards can have brown and dirty boarders, scuffing, well rounded off corners, water stains, writing and some may even have pieces missing. 2%-10%

Editor's Note: CBM would like to give a special thanks to ***George Borow*** *for writing initial introduction to this section. George is a nationally recognized collector of non-sports trading cards and was the first Overstreet Trading Card Advisor.*

MARKET REPORT

BRIAN & CAROL MORRIS
CB Comics Plus
P O Box 3792
Champaign, IL 61826-3792
(217) 398-0155

Global Warning isn't the only thing making this a hot summer for the CB Comics people! Card interest and sales are constantly on the rise. We do very little with packs, preferring to deal with sets and singles. However, the mystery of the packs still gets younger collectors to take a chance and invest in a new card series, more so than if they could see the cards for themselves and decide whether to buy them or not. Thus, we keep them around for a while before breaking them out also

Due to the expense of the boxes (mostly due to trading on the computer nets), our reasonably priced supplies of X-Men II, Doomsday, and the Marvel Masterpieces have all but dried up. Most of our customer base cannot afford the expense that we would have to pass on to them if we bought the aforementioned series at current prices, so we move on to other, newer series

Marvel Universe IV is selling (dare we say it?) marvelously! The common cards look wonderful in the nine-pocket sleeves, and selling one card on the page usually sells them all. The foil 2099 set is less than fully spectacular, but the magnificent Venom and Spider-Man hologram more than makes up for them

While the movie Jurassic Park is burning up the theaters, the cards from Topps are proving to be a disappointment and not up to their usual standards. As we reported last issue, we didn't get a complete set of common cards between two boxes and one acquaintance has reported not being able to fill a set with three boxes. We've also seen cases of extremely bad cutting. What happened to the quality control used on the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III or the Batman: The Animated Series cards?

The Star Wars Galaxy cards sell faster than we can restock them! The entire set is beautiful, especially the comic artist cards. The Walt Simonson foil cards are hot, hot, hot with wild fluctuations of price ($6 to $15) at some of the local card shows.

Although we had high hopes for Jim Shooter's new company, Defiant, the problems concerning the distribution of the Plasm folder seems to have hurt sales of the cards. Most collectors wanted the cards to put in the new folder, but can't get ahold of one easily. Hopefully, Dark Dominion will fare better.

Still, it's a good Summer for the card market. And no matter how much fun we have looking at the cards, perhaps we have even more pleasure from looking forward to what is yet to come.

Take care and be good!

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LINDA KANAI
Triple Play
3145 Preston Highway
Louisville, KY 40213
(502) 637-5303

TRADING CARD PRICE GUIDE

A-TEAM
Topps 1983

66 Card Set (w/12 stickers)	7.50
Singles	.10 ea.

ADDAMS FAMILY
Topps 1993

Box	10.00
CardSet (w/22 stickers)	7.00
Singles	.10 ea
Stickers	.25 ea

ADVANCE DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 1991
1 SR 1991

Gold Border: 746 cards	600.00
Series I, singles (1-373??) rare	1.00 ea.
Series II, singles (374??-746)	.50 ea.
Factory Set - Silver Border 750 cards	25.00

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 1992
TSR 1992

Gold Border: 750 cards	65.00
Singles	.08 ea.
Factory Set - Silver Logo: 750 cards	25.00

ALF I
Topps 1987

Box	8.00
Card Set (w/stickers)	8.00
Singles	.10 ea.
Stickers	.15 ea

ALF II
Topps 1988

Box	8.00
Card Set (w/stickers)	8.00
Singles	.10 ea.
Stickers	.15 ea.

ALIEN
Topps 1979

Box	45.00
Card Set (w/stickers)	18.00
Singles	.10 ea.
Stickers	.25 ea.

Alien #66 © 20th Cent. Fox

ALIEN 3
1992

Box	20.00
Card Set	12.00
Singles	.10 ea.

AN AMERICAN TAIL
SkyBox 1992

Box	15.00
Card Set	10.00
Singles	.10 ea.
5 Holograms	5.00 ea.

ARCHIE COMIC CARDS
SkyBox 1992

Box	22.00
120 Card Set	10.00
Singles	.10 ea.
5 Holograms	5.00 ea.
1 Mail-in card for Hologram	10.00

ARTHUR ADAMS
Comic Images 1989

45 Card Set	10.00
Singles	.20 ea.

BACK TO THE FUTURE II
Topps 1989

Box	22.00
88 Card Set (w/11 stickers)	10.00
Singles	.10 ea.
Stickers	.35 ea.

BARBIE
Panini/Action 1992

196 Card Set	20.00
Singles	.10 ea.

BARBIE AND FRIENDS SERIES II
Panini/Action 1992

198 Card Set (w/15 stickers)	20.00
Singles	.10 ea.

BARBIE TRADING CARDS SERIES I
Mattel 1990

300 Card Set	30.00
Singles	.10 ea.

BARBIE TRADING CARDS SERIES II
Mattel 1991

300 Card Set	30.00
Singles	.10 ea.

BATMAN SERIES I
Topps 1966

55 Card Set (Black Bat)	130.00
Singles	2.25 ea.

BATMAN - A SERIES
Topps 1966

44 Card Set (Red Bat)	110.00
Singles	2.25 ea.

BATMAN - B SERIES
Topps 1966

44 Card Set (Blue Bat)	120.00
Singles	2.50 ea.

BATMAN DELUXE TRADING CARD SET
Topps 1989 (Reissue of 1966 cards)

143 Card Set	18.00

BATMAN MOVIE SERIES I
Topps 1989

DRUM ROLL PLEASE

I know most of your letter writers want to discuss your main articles, but I want to give you some feedback on your market reporters. They are absolutely fabulous!!! Another collector friend and myself were trying to narrow down our favorite. It was very tough (agony actually) but we both eventually selected one as our nomination for best reporter. Drum roll please... We chose Lee Hester and here's why. We felt Lee had just the right amounts of straight reporting, general advice, and personal "soap boxing". Congratulations Lee on being the winner of the first Northern Illinois Outstanding Market Report Award (NIOMRA). We had such a kick discussing the pros and cons of good reporting that we thought we'd write to the Overstreet Monthly and let you guys know. We also suggest that other CBM readers from different parts of the country do the same. What do you think dear editor?

Bill Sandusky and John Gonzales, Illinois

I think it's an interesting idea but NIOMRA? Sheesh...

FRESH AIR

I really enjoyed the Jim Shooter article in CBM #4 and am glad to hear about a modern comic publisher who appears to care about good stories and character development. My impression of many of the new comics (I try to read just about everything, budget allowing) is that many do not. Your magazine continues to be a breath of fresh air in an often "stale" market.

Jeff A. Randessini, New York

It's nice to hear from a serious comic book reader. Thanks for reading us.

BRAVO CASPER

I could hardly believe my eyes when I saw Mark Arnold's truly fabulous "Casper" article in your #4 issue (in color no less). It was a Harvey collectors dream come true. After years (no decades) of Super hero this... and super hero that, finally a really good article in a nationally recognized comic collector's magazine on one of the most interesting and enduring characters ever created. In a hobby dominated by the "super-heroes only" mentality, bravo to Overstreet for this act of publishing bravery. It's no wonder so many describe you as the "only" Price Guide. All of the many collectors of non super hero comics that I correspond with all across the country have asked me to convey our thanks for publishing something for us. You have gained many new loyal readers!

M. Ellen McManis, California

One of our goals is to attempt to explore all aspects of this vast hobby. I'm glad we hit on one of your favorites. We admittedly took a bit of chance with the Casper article, but the feedback has been amazingly positive... even from many "super hero only" collectors. We were actually taken aback by Casper's phenomenal popularity and the fact that the voluminous positive mail we received about the article was from collectors of both genders and all ages. We even thought of changing our slogan to "Overstreet, the friendly Price Guide". What do you think?

TONY STARK'S CHART

This is my first letter to a magazine. I liked Tony Stark's chart comparing the old Solar with the new one. I talked about it with another collector for a long time and I decided to collect the Gold Key issues too. Jim Nelson, another collector who is older, sold us a few and they are almost as cool as the Valiants. We all think your guide has the most realistic prices. I hope you print my letter.

Jason Enriko (Age 9), New Jersey

I think their almost as cool as the Valiants too.

INCREDIBLE BARGAIN!

I thought Bill Howard did a nifty job on the Sotheby's auction report last time. Just a quick comment though. $40,000 for AF #15? Incredible! If a Silver Age book (albeit a high grade pedigree) can be worth that much, what is the potential value of a truly rare high grade Golden Age book? $40,000,000? I think we should all be buying up every 1930s and 1940s book we can get our hands on if this trend keeps up. Once again market events continue to support my contention that GA books are an incredible bargain when compared to SA and Recent stuff. I'd like to know what you think. Great magazine. Keep those great articles coming.

When compared against Silver Age and Modern comic prices, most Golden Age comics do seem to be a bargain.

J.I.M. REQUEST

I have been collecting Strange Tales for about 20 years now, so it was with great interest that I read Pat Calhoun's entry in your last issue. Most pre code Strange Tales are really superb

comics and the title remains a relatively undiscovered gem from the fifties. specimens of ST are often hard to locate in any grade. How about an article from Mr. Calhoun on pre code Journey Into Mystery? I trust I may look forward to it in a future issue.

Ian B. Allen, London, United Kingdom

You May!

WHICH ONE HAD MORBIUS?

I have been a loyal fan of your publication for a long, long time. I feel that "Overstreet" is the best comic book price update magazine in circulation today. Your interviews are great and your pricing accuracy and format is outstanding. Keep up the great work. I also have some points I would like to share.

Action Comics #261 - 1st appearance of Streaky, the Super Cat; #521 is the first appearance of Vixen. Adventure Comics #329 - first Bizarro Legion of Superheroes. Amazing Spider-Man #46 - 1st appearance of the Shocker. Batman #210 - Catwoman story; #232 - 1st app. of Ra's Al Ghul; #332 - 1st solo Catwoman story. Brave & Bold #166 & 185 - Penguin appearances; #191 - stars both Joker & Penguin; #197 - Catwoman appearance. Detective Comics Annual #1 - Penguin. Doctor Strange (old series) #179 - Spider-Man appearance.

Dr. Strange (new) #10 - Morbius appearance. Green Lantern #122 is the 2nd Guy Gardner as GL, not #123; #122 is a story that guest stars Superman and Guy is in the Phantom Zone. Hulk #153 - Hulk Vs. Thing. Justice League of America #61 - early Penguin app.; #73 & #74 1st return of Golden Age Superman & J.S.A. story; #82 & #83, #91 & #92, #100 all J.S.A. story; #136 Earth 2 Joker app. Marvel Team Up #4 - Morbius app.; #146 Nomad app. Marvel 2 in 1 #63 Warlock app.; #96 Wolverine app. New Teen titans #39 is 5th app. of Deathstroke the Terminator.

Tales of Teen Titans #54 & #55 - Deathstroke appearances. Teen Titans #18 - 1st appearance of Red Star. Web of Spiderman #24 & #47 - Hobgoblin appearances.

Also, there is an issue of Marvel Preview that featured Morbius, the Living Vampire - what issue was that?

That's all for now and until I get full guide price for my Amazing Spiderman #129 - Make Mine Overstreet.

John Roma, Canada

Marvel Preview #8 and Marvel Premiere #28 features the Legion Of Monsters with Morbius as a member. Thanks for your excellent data, John.

THANKS PAT!

I wanted to compliment you on a fine publication. While I miss the old CBM, it's nice to see you retained some of that flavor in your new monthly, and I'm anxiously awaiting the new quarterly magazine (Overstreet's ADVANCED Collector) that takes up where the old CBM left off.

Speaking of the old CBM, your new readers should really check it out. After being out of collecting for several years, I happened across CBM in Walden Books, and started subscribing with issue #18. It was such a blast to find a publication written for and by people more concerned with the enjoyment of a comic than how fast they can make a buck on it. It quickly became a highlight of my month.

When CBM ceased publication, I immediately went in search of back issues for my monthly "fix". After repeated unsuccessful searches, I started calling advertisers from old issues and happened upon Pat Calhoun. While I'm sure he knows what back issues are going for nowadays, he took pity and sold me the majority of the issues I was missing, all at extremely reasonable prices. Besides writing an excellent column for your magazine, he's an honest, reputable, kind person. Thanks, Pat!

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The articles and columns in the back issues are as much fun to read as the comics they're about! I strongly urge anyone to check out back issues of CBM. It's what Fandom is all about.

John Morrow, North Carolina

Thanks for your enthusiasm about CBM series I. Back issue sales have literally gone through the roof lately, and many issues are in short supply. As for your assessment of Pat Calhoun, it is 100% accurate.

FAIR '39 & TEC #40

I very much enjoyed Steve Gentner's article on New York Fair Comics 1939. I think most Golden Age historians agree with Steve's contention that the book was reduced in price due to low sales, but it should be noted that DC gave exactly the opposite reason for the price change.

In an ad in Superman #2, the publisher states: "Due to the unprecedented demand for this souvenir book and to our desire to show our appreciation to our readers for their loyalty, the price of this book on the newsstands will be 15¢ instead of 25¢ as formerly advertised in all our magazines. Those who have paid 25¢ will have, by this time, received their complimentary copy of the Superman book (Superman #1?) selling at 10¢ to make up the difference in price." Incidentally, the ad reproduces Fair 39's cover, and in the reprint Superman's hair is it's normal color. He is not blonde.

You asked for opinions on the Detective #40 cover. In my opinion, it is clearly the Joker who is depicted. To add to the evidence you've already provided (and anyone who looks at the splash page of the last story in Batman #1 should be convinced), Clay-Face wears a cloak in every panel in which he appears in the Batman story in Detective #40, but the character on the cover has no cloak. Keep up the good work!

Bill Tighe, Pennsylvania

Imagine sending in a quarter and getting back a manila envelope with a New York Worlds Fair 1939 AND a Superman #1! Where's that time machine when you really need it! Thanks Bill, points well taken.

PAPERBACK COMICS

I own a comic book store in Lubbock, TX, and recently a customer of mine asked me if I knew anything about hard and soft cover comic book reprints. The soft cover books were from the late 70's by Pocket Books. There were several hard cover books from the early 80's. I never new Marvel had reprinted early issues of Amazing Spider-Man or Incredible Hulk in paperback. I was wondering if there was any value on these or if there were ever going to be more collected early issues in paperback that would be more accessible and at a cheaper price. I would appreciate any information you could send me. I would also like to tell you I buy your price guide. It is the best on the market.

Lawrence Peck, Texas

I regrettably do not know the answer to your question. Maybe a knowledgeable CBM reader can give us both some assistance. Thank you for your support. We appreciate it!

AUTOGRAPHED COMICS

Like what you've done with the price guide. But down to business. I've got a question. Why don't you have more about autographed comics. Like X-Men #300 which goes for about $15 to $25. Or Tribe #1 goes for about $7.50, but the white & gold goes for about $75. I've also seen Cage #1 autographed & Cable #1.

Charles Stewart, Tennessee

The value of autographed comics continues to be a very controversial topic. Some collectors and dealers are asking and getting a substantial premium for signed copies, while others are equally as passionate in their view that the autograph may deface the comic. To further complicate the issue, a faction of collectors who are interested in autographed books, only want them if the signature is in an esthetically pleasing location (such as the white margin at the bottom of page 1, etc.). There is even an incidence or two of forged signatures. All this means that it will be some time before this problem sorts itself out. Autographed copies can be a great personal momento from a favorite artist or writer. I feel it's impossible at this time to predict whether or not autographed copies will turn out to be a good investment.

UNCLE SCROOGE QUESTION

Just bought Uncle Scrooge #281, the first issue of the new Gladstone series, and I was surprised at the similarity between "Some Heir over the Rainbow" and another Uncle Scrooge story I once read.

This other story was in a Donald Duck comic book from 1978, done by Whitman Publishing. It had a green cover which pictured Donald in a rowboat that was being held by an octopus. I wish I could remember the issue number.

As in the Barks tale, Scrooge is looking for an heir to his fortune, but instead of hiding money at the end of the rainbow, he hooks money pots to the end of Donald and the boys' fishing lines. I forgot what Donald did with his share (something stupid, you may be sure), but the boys grubstaked a gold miner (a treasure diver in the Barks version) and wound up inheriting Scrooge's fortune. Another difference is the Whitman version didn't feature Gladstone Gander.

I thought this tidbit might interest you. maybe someone might write in and tell the issue number.

Shaun Moser, Virginia

Maybe someone will.

FIRESTORM #61

I have the Fury of Firestorm #61. The cover has the title of Firestorm the Nuclear Man #61. But the inside cover credits say it is the Fury of Firestorm #61. How come?

Ronnie Mathews, South Carolina

The cover title changed before the indicia did, and we go by indicia. (Also see Green Lantern/G.L. Corps listing.)

#59 NOT 57

Glad to see your fairly detailed Spider-Man listing. But M.J. Watson cover is certainly a worthy entry, however it is #59 not #57.

Bruce Thailing, Ohio

You are so right Bruce. The master data base is being corrected even as we speak. By the by, if you get a chance, check out Tony Stark's article on Mary Jane Watson in the premier edition of Overstreet's ADVANCED Collector.

CHICAGO CON WAS GREAT

Well, I just got back from my annual trip to the Chicago Comicon. Had a good time as always, meeting new fans and talking to the DC guys about their upcoming projects. I also got to meet and talk with some greats at DC like Dick Giordano, Curt Swan, Murphy Anderson, Julius Schwartz, Denny O'Neil, Archie Goodwin, and the up and coming guys too. Thanks fellas. What a gas that was to meet and talk to you. I also got to meet and talk with Neal Adams. What a nice man. Thanks Neal.

The reason I wrote, was to thank Michael Naiman for what he wrote in the July issue of his "4 Color 4 Cast" column about the DC Secret Origins #1. I knew this book existed and had to get it, but I didn't think I would find it so fast. It's just like Michael said a giant ComiCon was like, and yes I'm very much a hard core DC collector. My other two friends also found the books they wanted. Wayne found Adventure #257. He's a Legion nut and now thinks he has all their appearances. Justin found his X-Men #1 so it was a good trip for all. Thanks for the article and the tip Michael.

Brian Smith, Ohio

I can remember purchasing Secret Origins #1 from the stands way back when... and it continues to be one of my all time favorite Silver Age books. There's just something about it that intrigues most collectors. A number of CBM readers wrote in to tell us how successful the Chicago Con was... especially for finding great material for sale. We were glad to hear it. Michael Naiman is especially talented at market analysis and he usually has his thumb right on the pulse of the market.

IT'S INFURIATING

Just wanted to bring up a point about comic book art in the industry today. I strongly believe that the story is just as important as the art. I also believe that the art should help tell the story. I feel so many artist's today have lost the concept of storytelling.

How many times have you been reading a comic and had to stop to figure out which was the next panel! It's infuriating. Sure artistic expression is important to comics, but it should never inhibit the flow of the story. It is my opinion that reading a comic book should be like watching a movie. The reader should flow through the story, and feel like he/she is a part of the action.

Don't get me wrong, there are still good artist's that don't sacrifice the story to show off their talents. Jim Califiore is a standout. I feel his work involves the reader much better than most of the "hot" artist's. It just seems to me that most of the stuff today is full of pinups with word balloons attached to make it official.

On a more positive note, I'd like to

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The Serious Guide for Serious Collectors

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OVERSTREET COMIC BOOK MONTHLY

thank Brian at Buried Under Books in Manchester, CT, for turning me on to some great reads. If every retail store had someone as enthusiastic, and informative as him running their shop, the industry would benefit greatly. Don't forget to read your comics.

Chris Matarazzo, Connecticut

You are not alone. We get hundreds of letters addressing the need for more good stories and story telling technique in modern comics. But in fairness, I think that the industry has actually changed very little over the years. In every era of comic book history there has been great stuff and not so great stuff. The good news is… fans eventually gravitate to the good stuff.

OLD FRIENDSHIPS NEVER DIE

I've been reading all the letters being sent in and thought it's about time I got my two cents in. I've got a couple of things I'd like to point out, suggest, or request as it may be.

How's about an article explaining how the comic companies put together and package comics (polybags)…

I am hoping to see Jurassic Park (standard and gold) and Nickelodeon added to the Non-Sports Trading cards section, and how about uncut sheets?? I'm still new in the Trading Card biz, but seems these could have some value. Speaking of Trading Cards, how about an article or two on them (teeny ones).

In the comics area, any pricing available on DC's Freedom Fighters, and Steel (Steel came out around the same time as Black Lightning 1977), and how about Atlas comic's Scorpion?

One last idea for file thirteen. How about a summary page showing only comics and cards that made a change…either up or down…since last issue. Maybe even a percentage column showing the loss or gain. Comics are for collecting…and investing. A summary sheet would allow the investment half of us collectors to skim the market.

Nuff said for now, except the praise. CBM is doing great work here, keep it going. I've been away ten years and CBM has me right in the know…old friendships never die.

Joe Potter, Maryland

We are planning an article on polybagging, although so far its pretty "dry" reading. We are also investigating how to value uncut sheets… look for the results of that inquiry in an upcoming issue. As for Atlas (Seaboard) Comics, an article has already been prepared and has been scheduled for the next Overstreet ADVANCED Collector. Watch for it! Now about the percentage analysis you suggest. We like the idea but it is a purely practical matter of not having the space. I do calculate the percentage on my home computer though. It can be very helpful in analyzing general trends. Sorry we can't help on this one but hey… you could always do your own? Thanks for taking the time to help us improve. We take your feedback to heart! And your right, old friendships never die… especially if they have comic book collecting as a common interest.

COULDN'T STAND IT ANY MORE

I've waited patiently to see how long it would take you guys to screw up my favorite comics related publication (Update) with the new format. Maybe there would be fewer market reports, maybe there would be monthly columns on how to speculate on new comics and make lots of money by buying ten zillion copies of Dodo Head #0. Maybe you'd even become a price guide that reports the latest "hot" trends instead of national averages.

After four issues I couldn't stand it any more so I decided to write and let you know exactly what I thought about the changes. The new CBM is absolutely OUTSTANDING! Did I actually count 37 (!) market reports in CBM 4? The articles in all of the issues so far have been informative and interesting. I'm glad CBM has evolved from the Overstreet Updates and Comic Book Marketplace. Well, I'm off to write to a few of your competitors to tell them what I think of their price guides. Keep up the great work.

Mark Sugiyama, Washington

Whew… you had me worried for a minute there, Mark. I'm not familiar with Dodo Head #0. Could you send us a photo copy for our records?

DEACIDIFICATION DILEMMA

I have been collecting comics for at least 10 years to date. When I started collecting, I tried to maintain (or at least thought I was maintaining/preserving) my books by bagging, boarding and boxing my books as soon as I purchased them. I used polyethylene and polypropylene (PE & PP) bags to "preserve" the books.

In the last few years, I've been educating myself on the true "preservation" procedures needed & materials to maintain my collection. With the help of literature from Bill Cole Ent. and some other reference material I picked up, I found out that not only is PE and PP not good for preservation purposes, but also that it will not last a long time. So, after learning this, I started to change over all of my books from PE & PP to Mylites/Mylars with archival quality boards. (w/PH buffer), acid free tape and boxes (in the process of purchasing acid free boxes).

All this leads to the questions I have concerning books which have not been properly handled/preserved over time (not saying that my collection has been destroyed). I purchased a few books recently and the books have some tanning (approximately Owl 7/8) to the interior cover and pages. My questions are as follows:

1. Is deacidification of a book considered restoration?

2. If deacidification is considered restoration, how does this affect the price of the book? Is the book, once deacidified, a grade lower in price?

I would appreciate it if my questions were answered by your staff. I think that many collectors/investors have the same type questions.

p.s. I enjoy using the Overstreet Grading Guide and here's a congratulations on the new Overstreet Comic Book Monthly. I was delighted to see it published and I feel it is the most accurate guide out there.

Joseph C. Figured Jr., Pennsylvania

(1) Many collectors feel that deacidification is a form of restoration. Anyone considering the various types of deacidification should do a lot of homework and consult several experts on the topic. A number of sources suggest many of the techniques may actually damage paper and ink colors. (2) There is no blanket formula and requires evaluation on a case by case basis. Did the process actually damage the book in any way? How did the process affect the condition? (as an aside here, I've suggested in a number of publications that when a comic is restored it should be described with an APPARENT GRADE not an actual grade. This eliminates confusion and instantly informs the potential buyer that the book is restored. This approach, combined with keeping a restoration list that remains with the book in perpetuity, is an excellent method of addressing this problem.). Hope that helps and thanks for your kind words of support.

SUPER PET CHALLENGE

Hi, first off I'd like to say I love your mag! I am writing because I am a major Super-Pets fan. Below is a list I have compiled of all the Super-Pets I know of and their first appearances and other significant appearances. Action Comics #261 (1st Streaky, the Super Cat), #293 (origin: Comet, the Super Horse), #668 (Beppo, the Super Monkey is reintroduced into the DC universe/no super powers); Adventure Comics #210 (1st Krypto, the Super Dog), #214 (2nd Krypto), #219 (1st Chando, the Super Ape), #220 (3rd Krypto), #225 (1st Super Bird), #293 (1st Comet/Legion of Super Pets); Batman #92 (1st Ace, the Bat-Hound), #97 (2nd Ace), #462 (Ace is reintroduced into the DC universe); Green Lantern (First series, Golden Age), #30 (1st Streak, the Wonder Dog); Superboy (1st Series), #53 (1st Super Zoo), #76 (1st Beppo, the Super Monkey), #82 (1st Bizzaro Krypto), #87 (1st Kolli, Krypto's Super Sweetheart), #92 (1st Destructo), #105 (1st Swifty, the Super Dog), #109 (2nd and last Swifty), #126 (origin: Krypto), #130 (1st Super Turtle), #136 (1st? Space Canine Patrol Agents); Adventures of Superman #501 (reintroduction of Krypto to the DC universe/no super-powers).

I'm also a fan of Rex in the following: Adventures of Rex, the Wonder Dog #1-46; DC Comics Presents #35, 40*; Flash (3rd series) 46, 47, 50*, 51*, 61, 70, 74*; Green Lantern (3rd series) #30, 31, 37*, 38*; Guy Gardner #1*, Justice League of America #144, 148*; The Official Justice League of America Index #5; Secret Origins (2nd series) #40*, 47*, 48, 50*; Who's Who (Comic format) #6*, 19; Who's Who (loose leaf format) #14; Adventures of Rex, the Wonder Dog #4 (Detective Chimps 1st appearance). Well, that's my list. If anyone knows of any other appearances than those I've listed, maybe they could write in. Thanks...

Mike Grocthaces, Missouri

I'm sure some other Super Pet/Rex aficionados will take up your challenge...

NOT QUITE COMMON KNOWLEDGE

First off, let me be the millionth person to congratulate you on your new format. I look forward each and every month to your market reports (very helpful) and your very accurate price guide. But on to the business at hand:

By now I'm sure you and your readers know about the new comic company Defiant, and Jim Shooters send-off comic, Plasm. You might also be aware of the fact that to read the zero issue of Plasm, readers must collect the Plasm trading set, and put them in a 9-pocket card sheet. The River Group (the company distributing the cards) also has put out a binder to put the cards in, as an added collectible. But, The River Group only put out (printed) 15,000 binders with an order of 75,000 binders (to my knowledge, the binders were printed before orders came in). Scarcity makes a collectible, and those binders (with a regular cost of 10-20 dollars), now sell/trade for up to 100+ dollars on computer networks. As an added note, the embossed chase cards (listed for $9 each in your guide) are fairly rare, and again, sell/trade for up to $60 on the computer networks. Once word catches on, and Defiant launches it's first real comic (there was a printed version of the zero story in Previews) I feel these items will most likely escalate in value. Hope this info was of some help because these scarcities are not quite common knowledge yet.

Jake Rossen, No Address Given

It is now...

PRE HERO VALIANT

It was a pleasure to meet you at Defiant comics seminar in Nashville a few weeks ago. Jim Shooter is quite a guy.

I was wondering if you or any of the readers know about the early Valiant printing of Nintendo Video Game characters. While going through the "cheap" boxes at my local comics mecca, I came across on oddity by Valiant on Game Boy. Over the next few months I discovered the Legend of Zelda, Super Mario Bros. and Adventures of Super Mario Bros. to my surprise. I found (2) different copies of Game Boy #4. The covers are the same except for size and placement of the

Valiant logo and the Nintendo Game Boy logo. Also, one copy is dated May #4. The other copy is roughly 1/2 inch wider, with a glossy cover with no indication of the month of issue.

The inside flap details that one was a 1990 printing, the other 1991, an obvious re-print.

Are these titles and different printings significant and are there other titles that are similar? The reading is not what I would call Universe shattering, but the art and lettering are good. Thanks to CBM for the best guide in the business.

Arnie Bush, Tennessee

The different printings are well documented but no data reporting in our records show a different value. Maybe some enterprising collector could write in with the definitive treatise on the subject. It was a pleasure to meet you too.

PEDIGREE "SNOB-APPEAL"

When we comic fans think of "Pedigree" Books, Church's Mile High's come to mind. The Mile High Pedigree often means that a particular book is the finest example known.

However, with the Pedigree Silver Age collections, this is not the case. While the White Mountain Amazing Fantasy #15 may be as good a copy as there is available, I felt The Fantastic Four #1 was not. In CBM #4, Dale Moore tells of a VF that just sold. CBM #2 features an ad from Wall to Wall offering an unrestored VF/NM. There's even an "untouched" VF FF #1 for sale (at this writing), here in little ol' Omaha. My point is that with a little research the buyer of the White Mountain FF #1 copy could have purchased one just as good for a lot less money.

I'm sure the buyer knew this, too. He didn't want "just" a top grade comic. He wanted to be able to say that his comic was special. (Maybe better!) I hope I'm wrong, but it seems to me that for some the "snob-appeal" of a Pedigree is often more important than the condition of the book.

Jack Gilreath, Nebraska

You're right... sometimes the "snob-appeal" of a Pedigree is often more important than the condition of the book.

MORE PLOOG PLUGGING

Recently CBM published a letter from Matthew Hall in issue #4 saying that he had found a copy of Man-Thing #11 at a shop and had found the Overstreet Guide to be in error. He said that Don Perlin was the artist and not Mike Ploog. What Matthew may not have realized is that there were two series of Man-Thing. The original series which spawned Howard the Duck (published by Marvel from January 1974 to October 1975) and the second series published in 1979-1981. What Matthew has, I think, is an issue of this later series. Mike Ploog did indeed pencil Man-Thing #11 (dated November 1974) and also drew the cover.

I also wanted to let you folks know how much I'm enjoying your magazine. The three level pricing is great, not many people can afford to collect only in NM condition.

I would appreciate a few more articles in the mixture and I'd also enjoy hearing from some of the older fans, the ones who prowled Cherokee Bookshop and haunted newsstands all Summer just hoping for that special comic.

Your previous incarnation (CBM Series I) had some wonderful letters on the hows, whys, and vicissitudes of collecting. Please run more letters and articles like this. I find them really great to read. Articles on 1970's comics (especially Marvel Monsters) would be welcome. Keep up the excellent work!

Ron Dale, Pennsylvania

For articles along the lines of those you describe, check out our new quarterly (overt and shameless plug) Overstreet's ADVANCED Collector!

SWAMPSTER WHO?

This letter is written in response to Darryl Jones' letter in OCBM #4 regarding Swamp Thing's appearance in Phantom Stranger.

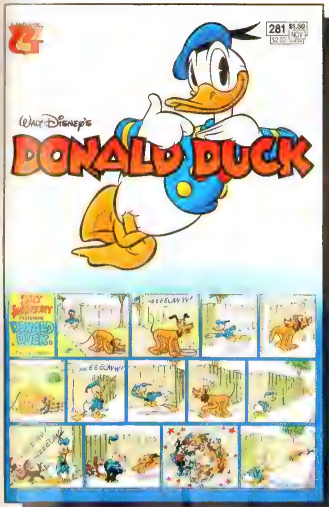
Phantom Stranger #14 (Jul/Aug 1971) is not an appearance of Swamp Thing, but is an appearance of the Swampster. Swampster was a man named Professor Zachary Nail. He ruled over a city hidden in the swamp. This city was void of any pollution or man made impurities and was inhabited by brainwashed captives. Thank you for your time.

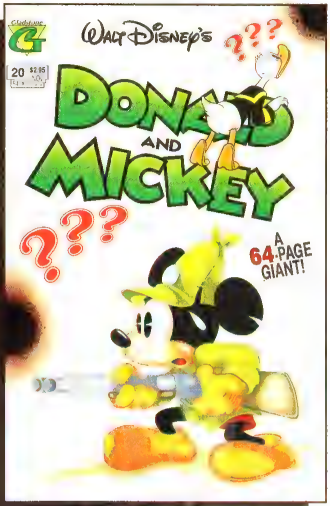
Dave Ortman California

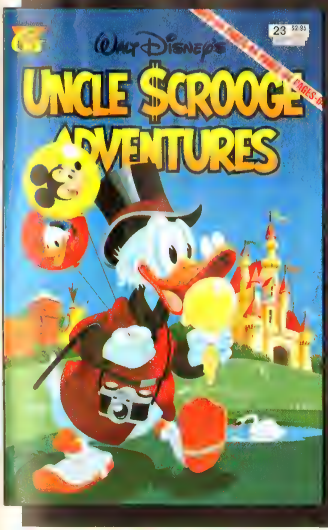
He's big, He's green, he lives in the... whoops! Thanks for "nailing" this down. We'd also like to thank all the hundreds of others who wrote this past month. Please be assured that we read every letter and take your feedback to heart. So, WRITE US! We love hearing from you! Send your data, comments, and questions to:

Marketplace Mail
c/o CBM
P.O. Box 2610
Cleve., TN 37320
or FAX us at
(615) 479-8156

THIS MONTH IN GLADSTONE







Donald Duck #281
The cover combines the work of Daan Jippes and Al Taliaferro. Barks' ten-pager "Ten-Star Generals," pits ex-Little Boonehead Donald's woodlore against the Junior Woodchucks'. 1930s Donald Duck "Silly Symphony" Sunday strips by Al Taliaferro feature a youthful Donald at his rascally best.

Donald and Mickey #20
"Wild About Flowers" by Barks starts off this 64-page giant. Then it's the 44-page "A Very Gooty Midas," a silly spectacular sporting a wealth of sight gags drawn by the talented hand of Jaime Diaz. Four classic Sunday Mickey Mouse strips fill out the issue.

Uncle Scrooge Adventures #23
This double-sized helping of our favorite miser is topped by a fully painted cover by Mel Crawford. Features a 32-page Paul Murry story starring Scrooge, Donald and Mickey attempting to thwart the machinations of the Phantom Blot and his cohorts, the Beagle Boys. There's also a "Financial Fable" by Barks, and from Denmark, a working vacation for Uncle Scrooge.

Simultaneously distributed to newsstands by Marvel.

Disney COMICS
DISTRIBUTED BY MARVEL

FOURTH WORLD COLLECTIBLES

Jack Kirby's Fourth World saga came along at just the right time for me, an English major with a head full of metaphors. By merging motifs from ancient mythology with tomorrow's science fiction, the Fourth World seemed to create a "new literature" for comics.

The story unfolded in four titles which juggled separate plotlines simultaneously, while each issue provided glimpses of the overall structure. The origin issue didn't appear for over a year, and when it did (in *New Gods* #7), the effect was exhilarating. As one of the covers proclaimed, "Far Out!"

Today a re-reading of the series, begun in *Superman's Pal Jimmy Olsen* #133 in (October 1970) and continued in *The Forever People*, *The New Gods* and *Mister Miracle*, confirms that Kirby's "magnum opus" remains an all-time high point in comics storytelling.

What seems at first to be a "cosmology" (that's cos-mol-o-gee, not cosmo-tol-o-gee) emerges as a highly perceptive allegory about the life choices that exist right here on Earth. Like all good mythology (that's myth-ol-o-gy, not... oh never mind), Kirby's outsized protagonists magnify and illuminate the eternal human conflicts; honor, pride, arrogance, and self-interest versus the common good.

Each title develops its own theme. *The Forever People* advances some Eastern philosophies, including the pursuit of unity and the need for self knowledge. The teenagers represent one of the greatest threats to Darkseid. Unfettered by tradition, this brash group of youngsters dares to challenge his authority.

When these introspective, peace-loving personalities put their individual differences aside, they merge to embody limitless power. By physically joining together - "Tarru!" - the Forever People become the mighty **Infinity Man**.

The young Fourth Worlders see technology not an end in itself, but as a given - a tool that enhances leisure and facilitates enjoyment of life. The orphan, Auralie, uses the Mother Box she builds (which is theoretically capable of doing anything) merely to create beautiful dancing figures. It's a tribute to Kirby's insight that an artist in his mid-50's was demonstrating such faith in the principles of the younger generation. He was also giving his young readers liberal credit for being able to follow his complex, interlocking story.

The themes presented in *Jimmy Olsen* illustrate the danger of science run amuck. The controllers of the super-secret Project are engaged in blind allegiance to "science for science's sake" - with disastrous results such as the "Four-Armed Terror", which nearly causes a nuclear meltdown.

Metron of New Genesis amorally straddles warring camps in his quest for knowledge, while the Hairies (read: hippies) in their rustic woodland reject the Project's sterile think-tank, and embrace instead nature-based pursuits.

"A Superman in Supertown" in *Jimmy Olsen* #147 shows that even Superman, an old-fashioned, blood-and-thunder hero, is unprepared to share in the free-thinking, utopian vision of the "New Agers". He learns to his chagrin that, in a land where everyone is self-reliant, there's really no need for a super-powered savior.

The New Gods evokes the beginnings of Western civilization, with strong individual heroes contesting questions of honor. Orion is too preoccupied with proving his own better nature to "stop and smell the roses" like his pal Lightray advises. Born of savage Apokolips, but held in check by his pacifist nurturing on New Genesis, Orion is comics' most graphic representation of heredity versus environment. Tragically divided, he is man's higher nature struggling to overcome its animal origins.

Within the Fourth World tetralogy (four related story lines), dramatically satisfying book length stories embroider its layered tapestry. "The Glory Boat" in *New Gods* #6, "Funky Flashman" in *Mister Miracle* #6, and "The Death Wish of Terrible Turpin" in *New Gods* #8, present earthlings who find themselves unable to comprehend the battle of the gods that rages around them. The same approach characterized The Odyssey 2800 years earlier.

Significantly, the larger-than-life Fourth Worlders never refer to themselves as gods. They worship youth and

© DC Comics

By Steve Beery

© DC Comics

the mystery of the Source, and, far from being immortal, they're vulnerable to the judgment of the Black Racer. Their superhuman abilities are not innate, but rather the result of extensive Special Powers Training - not available, it's worth noting, to the slumdwellers of Armagetto.

Lightray's light-manipulating powers (like Orion's flying astro harness and Darkseid's devastating Omega Effect), are implied to be technological in origin. Like Homer, Kirby trusts his readers to interpret many of the "details" for themselves.

Mister Miracle, in many ways Kirby's most humane and interesting title, showcases the American Dream. The New World has traditionally offered the promise of escaping one's upbringing to pursue an independent destiny. Scott Free, who becomes a super escape artist in order to challenge his past, is a powerful reflection of the immigrants - Kirby's people - who came to America to do expressly that.

This freedom of choice, the ability to rise above Old World class constraints, is also what Dickens found so appealing about America. The name Scott Free is itself Dickensian. In Oliver Twist, little Oliver explains that he was given his name - a pun on the bartender's question "olive or twist?" - in the orphanage to help make him feel like an individual. Granny Goodness's motives are more ironic; she wants to plant the seeds of revolt in Scott, so he'll break the peace sealed by the exchange of heirs between Darkseid and Highfather.

"Himon" in *Mister Miracle* #9 introduces the antidote to anti-life. Himon, like Kirby himself, is a visionary freethinker who's perpetually betrayed by his fellow outcasts. Eluding capture, he encourages the children in his charge to dare to dream beyond Apokolips. He entreats Scott Free to reject the security offered by Darkseid, and to seek his own destiny instead - to cast his imagination beyond existing political structures in order to tap his individuality.

Imagination is also shown to be fundamental in contacting the Source. Himon's self-serving betrayer, Kreetin, can't see beyond his own narrow interests, and therefore his Mother Box refuses to work. After he's been killed by Darkseid's minions for his expediency, his captor remarks, "This one had the least expectations!!"

In a lesser creator's hands, the planet Apokolips would have been populated entirely by "bad guys." But Kirby portrays such functionaries as Kanto and Virman Vundabar as victims of their own ambition. The slums of Armagetto teem with downtrodden souls who've made the mistake of allowing themselves to be deluded by sweet-smelling promises. Darkseid himself possesses a noble humanity, his arrogance tempered by bouts of tortured self-doubt and an overweening pride which proves to be his undoing.

Sadly, the series was abruptly canceled in mid-flight. Kirby valiantly tied up what loose ends he could in *New Gods* #11. When "The Hunger Dogs" (the conclusion to the series) came along in 1984 as *DC Graphic Novel* #4, it was welcome but more than a little disappointing. Kirby had followed the Fourth World in the later '70s with series such as OMAC (One Man Army Corps) and Captain Victory, and at this point in his career his concerns involved what he saw as the inevitable merger of technology and humanity. Thus the circuitry of the Micro-Mark is a prime mover behind Darkseid's latest grab for anti-life.

As Orion's love interest, Himon's daughter Bekka comes in from left field. In *New Gods* #9, the playwright Eve Donner had been introduced as Orion's eventual arbitrator. "The sleeping monster - the raging heart - a vessel of fire which consumes - even - love..." Eve had mused while contemplating Orion's divided nature. "You shall judge Orion!" Lightray replied. "And none shall do it for you!" Had this scenario been fulfilled, it would have provided a thematic resolution that's missing. And the climactic peasant uprising of the Hunger Dogs themselves, long anticipated as a full-scale revolution, is inexplicably abbreviated.

Although Kirby envisioned his epic as a finite story which would eventually conclude, the fact is that the King did too good a job of laying his foundation. The characters are so engaging, their motivations so believable, that, like many of the subplots Kirby tossed off so casually at Marvel during the '60s, the basic story structure refuses to die. More's the pity. In lesser hands (and in my opinion nearly everyone in comics is a lesser hand compared to Kirby), revivals of the New Gods, and Mister Miracle, and the resurrection of his concepts for Justice League and Cosmic Odyssey have diluted rather than enhanced Kirby's monumental vision.

As it turns out, the Fourth World mythos was years ahead of its time. It deserves to be reprinted now in trade paperback form. Including *Super Powers* #5, written and drawn by Kirby in 1984, and featuring a deliberately accessible, cartooned Darkseid, the complete saga comprises 58 issues. They presently guide for a total of roughly $200 in fine (i.e. collectible yet readable condition), and $445 in near mint, still a steal! Until the book reprints are more than just a dream, this run is well worth its share of anyone's comic book budget. ■

FOURTH WORLD "INVESTIBLES"

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, while still working at Marvel, Jack Kirby was secretly hatching a new series that was to encompass a theme and story line that was near and dear to Jack's creative heart. He was growing tired of the conventional superhero ordeals that were becoming all too commonplace in comicdom. All that was needed was the right opportunity and circumstances to bring forth this new idea. As luck would have it, the "right opportunity" came in the guise of Jack's old friend at DC, Carmine Infantino. Lured by the extraordinary offer of complete creative control over any of the books that he might want to work on, Kirby was to bring forth his new series entitled the *"Fourth World."* The rest is comic book history.

There seems to be two camps of thought as to the interpretation of the term *"Fourth World."* One concept is that it indicates the four worlds of the comic tetralogy while the other purports that this is the *"Fourth World"* that had already been preceded by the Biblical era, the Babylonian/Mesopotamian era, the Medieval era and finally the tetralogy's era. The books all relate one continuing story of mythic proportions. Kirby's yarn chronicles a war between New Genesis and Apokolips over a "secret" that is hidden somewhere on Earth. It is a classic story of the virtuous good-guys versus the malevolent and grotesque denizens of evil. Kirby has masterfully woven a tale that examines the conflict from a different point of view from every title.

© DC Comics

The power of Kirby's storytelling and the explosive energy that is somehow frozen and contained within every panel is, in some collectors opinion, the ultimate Kirby artistic expression. Jack's fantastically designed mega-machines with their unorthodox textures and ornate trimmings and the readily identifiable "blocky" yet powerful character forms enabled him to smoothly relate this galactic tale of conflict.

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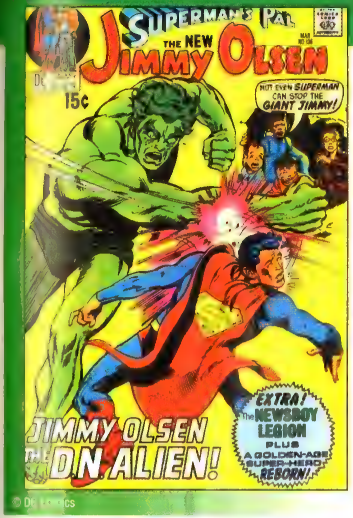
After the initial acclaim and excitement surrounding Kirby's new stories had subsided, sales figures began to slump and Infantino decided to yank Kirby from the Jimmy Olsen title in April of 1972. The tetralogy was now a trilogy and fandom was, once again, exercising it's fickle buying attitude. Some have postulated that the cause of the slipping sales was because of the complex interweaving of the story and plot line between the different titles. It was very difficult to pick up a random out-of-sequence issue and familiarize yourself with the already unfolded plot line. Undependable distribution to the newsstands also might have contributed to the sustained popularity problems. By the end of 1972, Infantino had informed a disappointed Kirby that the series would be prematurely ended.

All this intra-company intrigue, their immense initial popularity, the fact that it has been two decades since the

By Michael Naiman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JIMMY OLSEN
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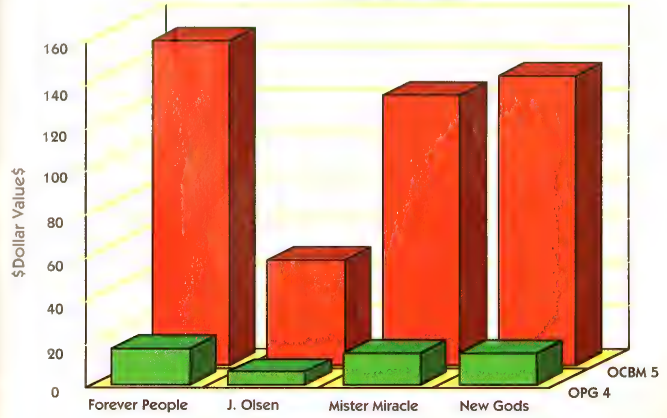
NOT EVEN SUPERMAN CAN STOP THE GIANT JIMMY!
EXTRA! The NEWSBOY LEGION PLUS A GOLDEN-AGE SUPER-HERO REBORN!
JIMMY OLSEN The D.N. ALIEN!

were originally published, plus Jack Kirby's place in comic book history... all contribute to investment potential.

The analysis of values that follows will examine the run of all four titles in the *Fourth World* series. A dramatic increase in value has been experienced within the past five years as can readily be observed in the accompanying graphs. With the current publication of the TOPPS *Secret City Saga* starring Kirby created characters, a whole new generation of readers are being exposed to the genius of Jack "King" Kirby. As first-time and younger readers pick up the new titles, it seems a logical hypothesis that they will eventually migrate to the back issue bins looking for other Kirby creations. His legendary *Fourth World will be waiting!* ■

Special thanks to research contributors Dr. John Townsend and Greg Pharis



BILL EVERETT'S SUB-MARINER CIRCA ~~1939~~ ~~1953~~ 1972!

It was June of 1972 and dusk had descended upon what would become to be known as the Silver Age of Marvel Comics. After all, Jack Kirby was creating his Fourth World at DC and Steve Ditko had been gone from Spider-Man for some time. Even Stan Lee was no longer writing every Marvel title, having given the reins of most titles to hungry young writers.

Yet, Marvel still held a steady course. It's flagship title, *The Fantastic Four*, was well past it's 100th issue, *The Avengers* were right at their centennial issue. New titles were coming out such as *Marvel Spotlight*, *Hero for Hire* and *Combat Kelly*.

So it was not unusual that a 50th issue of a particular title went almost unnoticed. This issue featured the very first Marvel super hero. But more importantly it was being written and drawn by the man who *created* him! The book: Sub-Mariner. The Man; Bill Everett!

Instantly, Everett breathed new life into his creation. Instead of looking like a variation of Star Trek's Mr. Spock in swimming trunks, Prince Namor's regal bearing had finally returned. Under Everett's pens and inks, Namor's strength and grace flowed through each panel. Sub-Mariner was back and he looked marvelous!

The 10 final entries for Bill Everett's Sub-Mariner comprise a historically important conclusion to the career one of the greatest comic book creators of all time. These "Last Hurrah" entries are as follows:

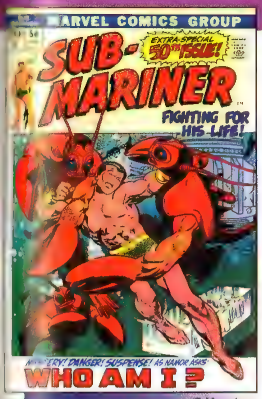
***Sub-Mariner* #50** (Jun 1972) featured not only a revived Namor but the first appearance of his young cousin Namorita or "Nita" as Sub-Mariner recalls her childhood nickname. She is the daughter of Namor's 1940s-50s first cousin Namora, who, in this story is long dead… yet perfectly preserved in a long glass coffin beneath the waves.

Not only does this story have Namora and Namorita, but it's vintage Everett with the return of Prince Byrrah, Namor's arch foe. Byrrah has teamed up with a female who is responsible for the murder of Namor's beloved Lady Dorma, Lyyra of Lemora. Throw in an army of mutated giant crabs and a bout of amnesia and it is all out action!

It should be mentioned that no one can make a reader feel as if one were swimming the vast depths of the ocean like Bill Everett. As difficult as it must have been to illustrate beings under the water, Everett made it appear natural. His detailed, yet fluid style was perfect for the watery environment.

© Marvel

By David Grisez



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***Sub-Mariner* #51** (Jul 1972) brought more of the same "Wild" Bill Everett style of action. Namor still battled Byrrah. Apparently Byrrah is working with the Brotherhood of Badoon who is making their second appearance since their initial entry in *Silver Surfer #2*

An uneasy alliance at best, both parties are ready to betray the other. With the help of Nita, Sub-Mariner triumphs, but not without an appearance of the deadly mutated giant crabs and a flashback witch revealed the fate of Nita's mother, Namora.

***Sub-Mariner* #52** (Aug 1972) brings Namor to the surface world in an attempt to locate Betty Dean, Namor's girl friend from the Golden Age of comics. Namor now finds Betty, retired from the police force, and uncovers a plot involving an insane warlord named Dragon-Lord and the second appearance of Sunfire. If Everett's art was superb in his underwater renderings, he was equally at ease in his fabulous "Battles in the Sky." Namor vs. Sunfire had once again involved the "elemental" battle of fire and water that Everett had made famous in the Golden Age. The angles and perspectives that Everett mastered enabled the reader to feel as if they were right up there in the sky!

***Sub-Mariner* #53** (Sep 1972) contains an eighteen page Everett story and a back-up reprint from the *Sub-Mariner Comics #41* (Aug 1955).

***Sub-Mariner* #54** (Oct 1972) brought a conclusion to the three-part Sunfire saga with fifteen pages of story and art. The back-up reprint comes from *Sub-Mariner Comics #39* (Apr 1955).

***Sub-Mariner* #55** (Nov 1972) brings the first new Everett cover. The villain of the story is named Torg, a name right out of the early Atlas monster books. He's green, gigantic, fanged and has a vocabulary! This books features Namor with an earring, Nita gets a tutor in Betty Dean and Torg gets a bath!

***Sub-Mariner* #57** (Jan 1973) Even though Everett is absent form issue #56, he returns with a vengeance in #57. One of the all-time great Sub-Mariner covers includes Namor battling Aries, the God of War... complete with circling blood-thirsty sharks and Venus, Goddess of Love, in bondage, awaiting the outcome of the battle. This is Venus's first appearance since the demise of her own title in the fifties.

***Sub-Mariner* #58** (Feb 1973) - is the last complete Everett art on this title, even though it is not his layouts. There is the first appearance of Tamara Rand, the companion of Tiger Shark. Once again solid story and art in the Sub-Mariner Saga.

***Sub-Mariner* #59** (Mar 1973) - Those who purchased this issue were treated to an excellent Everett cover featuring Namor vs. Thor, but only an Everett plot on the inside.

***Sub-Mariner* #61** (May 1973) - Everett was to return only once more, doing one more cover and four interior pages. Shortly afterward, the comic book world was shocked and saddened by Everett's untimely death. With the passing of Everett, the issue floundered eleven issues later.

For a little while, comic book fans from a whole new generation were thrilled by this great comics writer and artist. The Silver Age of Marvel was indeed over, yet this all-to-brief 10 issue run by Bill Everett offered a noteworthy and somehow prophetic conclusion. Often overlooked (and many feel undervalued), collectors and fans can affordably re-visit the few last journey's into Bill Everett's secret aquatic world inhabited the awesome Sub-Mariner... Bill's very first... and last creation. ■

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SUB-MARINER
SCOURGE OF THE SEVEN SEAS!
20¢ 59 MAR
STAND! THIS BACK, HAUGH! THOU SHALT NOT PASS!
NAY, MARINER! IS YOU NICE TO ASIDE!
I'M TALK TO UNTAMED WRATH OF MONARCH BORN!!
THOR... GOD OF THUNDER!
© Marvel

IT CAME FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE STACK!

I admit it. I love these books. So when I was offered the opportunity to share them with all of fandom, you can bet I jumped at the chance. So, here goes with the first installment of "It Came From the Bottom of the Stack."

***Superman* #53** - More data to report...As we all know, *Superman* #53 boasts one of the most classic Superman covers of all time as well as being the 10th anniversary issue featuring the origin of Superman. But it is also important to note, in this particular instance, that this is only the third time that the origin of Superman is told! The first origin was, of course, the June 1938 issue of *Action Comics* #1. The second time the origin was presented was in the pages of *Superman* #1 in the summer of 1939. Neither *Action* #1 or *Superman* #1 give any hint of Superman's origin on the cover.

Superman #53 is the first time that his origin is actually shown on the cover! On the upper right of the cover the planet Krypton explodes with "The Origin of Superman" centered in the blast. The rocket carrying baby Kal-el speeds towards the earth behind the figure of Superman. Through cover graphics, Superman's origin is shown here for the first time!

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A new facet of comic book collecting, however rare, may have been discovered here. Along with 1st editions, 1st appearances, origin issues, battle issues, and X-over issues, we can now add "cover origin" or "cover graphics origin" to the comic book "keys." Other comics that may fit this category are *Superman* #76 and #146, *Batman* #47, *All-Star* #3, *Marvel Family* #1, *Marvel Comics* #92, *Wow* #9, *Doctor Solar* #1, and *Fantasy Masterpieces* #9.

One more thing about *Superman* #53...this is only the second time that the origin is presented in Superman comics. The Overstreet Guide currently lists *Action* #1 at $75,000. *Superman* #1 weighs in at $65,000. At $900, *Superman* #53 would seem to be a good "poor mans" alternative to the origin issues of *Action* #1 and *Superman* #1. What do you think?

***Amazing Fantasy* #15** - A friend of mine recently asked me if I'm going to sell my copy of *Amazing Fantasy* #15 after finding out about the record sale at Sotheby's for $40,000.

Gary M. Carter said it best in the "Letter From The Editor" section a few issues back: "Marvel's character, Spider-Man, has emerged as one of the most important characters in comic book history. When any fictional character reaches the level of one of the most popular, globally known, cultural icons, the character's first appearance is bound to hit stratospheric values..." and is worth owning and keeping forever! For posterity...for your children's children...a family heirloom...

The fact that *Amazing Fantasy* #15 sold for $40,000 is great, but don't miss the point...Those of us that were fortunate enough to discover and follow the exploits of Spider-Man when he first came out in 1962 were merely had what we already knew reaffirmed by Sotheby's auction... that Spider-Man is truly amazing and that Spider-Man comics were "worth something!"

I'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, and Steve Ditko for creating a character that I greatly identified with as a kid. (And to some extent still do...).

Spider-Man remains unique and original because he's a nerdy, teen-age loser with coke-bottle glasses who was bitten by a radioactive spider and gifted with the proportionate strength and abilities of a spider. With a full face mask and body costume he could be anyone...perhaps even a "she"...perhaps you...perhaps me...

Please, people...if money is what you're

By John Mlachnik

...no, then be a brain surgeon, win the lottery, invest in real estate or stocks or bonds but those of you out there with a first appearance of any of these wonderful Golden or Silver Age characters should think 40,000 times before you ever consider selling them!

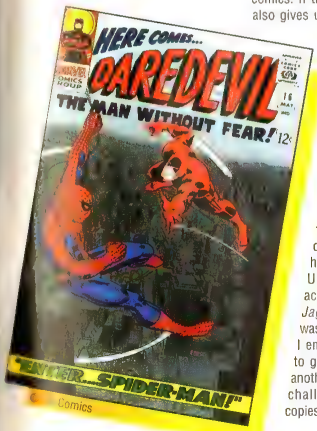
To drive home my point, consider a quote from the splash page of *Daredevil* #1 regarding the *Amazing Spider-Man* #1. "Remember this cover? (*Amazing Spider-Man* #1) if you are one of the fortunate few who bought this first copy you probably wouldn't part with it for anything!"

***The Double Life of Private Strong* #1** - Here's some sunshine for you... *Showcase* #4 (9-10/56) is, of course, DC's first Silver Age superhero and is considered by just about everybody as the beginning of the Silver-Age of comics. It currently guides at $10,000.... *Fantastic Four* #1 (Nov 1961) the beginning of the beginning of the "Marvel Age of Comics." It currently guides at $7200.

The Double Life of Private Strong #1 (Jun 1959) is the first Silver Age superhero for Archie Publications. While Archie Publication's superheroes haven't exactly set the hobby on fire, I believe that historically this particular issue is very important!

It follows *Showcase* #4's lead in that it also revives a Golden Age hero, the shield, and updates the uniform and identity thus claiming its part in the Silver Age of comics. If that isn't enough, this issue also gives us Archie Publications first original Silver Age superhero, the fly! It currently guides for $350.00, A bargain compared to *Showcase* #4 and *Fantastic Four* #1... and yet *Private Strong* #1 staked it's claim in the Silver Age of comics two and a half years before *Fantastic Four* #1!

Ask any collector and they'll tell you that high grade copies of Archie superheroes are very tough to find. Until recently, I've been actively searching for a nice *Jaguar* #1 for 12 years and was ecstatic to finally find one! I encourage serious collectors to give the Archie superheroes another look-you're in for a real challenge searching out nice copies...



***Daredevil* #16** - Stop the presses! *Daredevil* #16 represents John Romita's very first artwork on Spider-Man! Romita took over the art chores from Steve Ditko starting with *Amazing Spider-Man* #39 and enjoyed a 50 plus (?) issue run through the mid and late sixties, re-defining Spider-Mans "look", placing more emphasis on the "man" and less on the "spider". The more "spidery" look returned in *Amazing Spider-Man* #298 when Todd McFarlane returned Spider-Man to his "Ditkoesque" roots. John Romita was, is, and will remain, a very important facet to the Spider-Man legend, forever! *Daredevil* #16 continues to be an overlooked masterpiece by many Spider-Man afficiandos.

A closing note to Mike Friedlander from Pennsylvania... I've been secretly searching for an *Action* #1 and *Detective* #27 for 27 years. Why not send them to CBM to forward on a complimentary basis to me? There must be at least one philanthropist in the comic hobby with a "spare" Action 1 or Tec 27...?! (ho ho) More data next time! ■

CARDBOARD GOLD!

In 1960, my family went over to my grandparent's for a visit, and, as usual for a kid, I was bored stiff. So... my brother and I went on a treasure hunting expedition into the basement. Grandma had all sorts of "arts and crafts stuff", and it was in one of these boxes that I spotted the cardboard cover to *World's Finest Comics* #6. On that cover, Superman, Batman, and Robin smiled broadly as they shook the hands of American soldiers and sailors during World War II.

When I realized that all but the cover was missing, I gasped in horror, my eyes glazed over, and I dedicated the next 2 1/2 hours to the futile search for the missing interior pages of that comic. I never found them.

Three decades later, with my Silver age collection fully assembled, I cast my collector's eyes towards the possibility of older books. Browsing in my Overstreet and considering my options, it struck me: What about *World's Finest*? Incredibly, My favorite Golden Age dealer had recently accumulated (from four or five collections he had purchased over the past year or so) a run of *World's Finest* as well as *World's Best* #1! I thought... I pondered... I considered the factors:

(1) *World's Finest* is **old**, going clear back to the early '40s.

(2) *World's Finest* is **square bound** and that means rarer in grade.

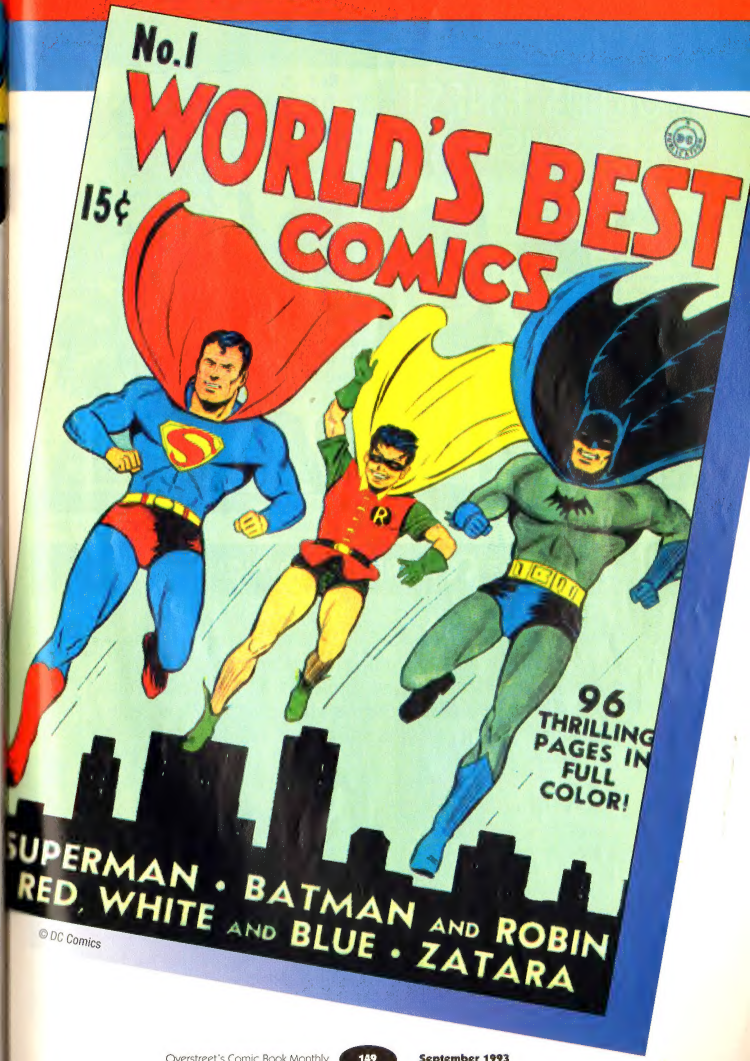
(3) *World's Finest* is a **DC**, the "Blue Chip" of Golden Age.

(4) *World's Finest* stars important and original characters like **Superman** and **Batman.** Consider the fact that *Action Comics* has only one Superman story and *Detective Comics* provided but one Batman story. *World's Finest*, on the other hand, contained both an original 13 page Superman story **and** an original 13 page Batman & Robin story in the same issue... plus both characters were portrayed on the cover!

(5) *World's Finest* has an original **cover price of 15¢** which means less young readers of the day could readily afford it.

By Steve Gentner

Continued on 3rd page following.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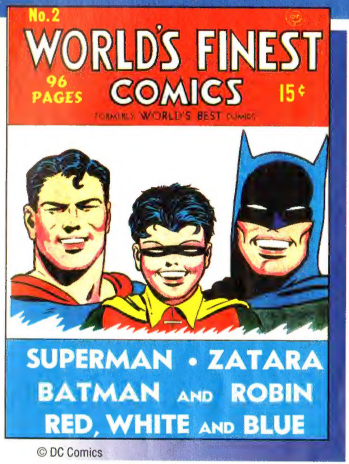

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Library of Congress Copyright Dates

World's Best and *World's Finest Comics* were "ash-can" copyrighted by date of publication November 22, 1940. Following this, *World's Best Comics* #1 hit the stands Feb 7, 1941. *World's Finest Comics* started with #2 and had publishing dates for the first nine issues as follows:

World's Finest Comics #2	Summer 1941	5/7/41
World's Finest Comics #3	Fall 1941	8/15/41
World's Finest Comics #4	Winter 1941	11/10/41
World's Finest Comics #5	Spring 1942	2/3/42
World's Finest Comics #6	Summer 1942	4/28/42
World's Finest Comics #7	Fall 1942	7/28/42
World's Finest Comics #8	Winter 1942	10/27/42
World's Finest Comics #9	Spring 1943	1/26/43
World's Finest Comics #10	Summer 1943	4/24/43

(6) *World's Finest* has **96 big pages** in **full color** between two **cardboard covers.**

(7) *World's Finest* has **backup features** which were many and varied. Culled from the best features in other DC titles, the list of "2nd tier" heroes is impressive in and of itself. The list includes characters like **Crimson Avenger, Zatara, and Johnny Thunder.** As time progressed, new characters were added to bolster the *World's Finest Comics* line-up. The **original Sandman** debuted in *World's Finest* #3 (coming from *Adventure Comics*), and also contained the first appearance of the **Scarecrow** in a Batman story!

TNT, with Dan the Dyna-Mite, came on board with issue #5 for a one shot, and in issue #6 **Superman** met **Metallo**! Issue #6 also brought in **Aquaman**! Issue #7 features Superman working out in his mountain **Fortress of Solitude**, and the "new" **Simon & Kirby Sandman**, and **Green Arrow and Speedy also** debuted.

New back-up characters were shuttled in and out of the line-up to provide the reader with an incredible variety for his 15¢... yet the foundation of the whole title rested squarely on the shoulders of the Man of Steel and the Dark Knight.

(8) *World's Finest* was edited by comic industry legend Whitney Ellsworth, who later went on to help produce the George Reeves "Superman" TV show of the 1950s, among many other notable accomplishments.

(9) When compared with other Golden Age DC titles of the same age, the entire run of *World's Finest* seems amazingly inexpensive!

After weighing these 9 factors, I decided to take the plunge into the wonderful world of Golden Age comics, and I've been happy that I did ever since.

It should be noted that the last cardboard cover graced *World's Finest* #17. Square bound paper covers continued until around issue #50 or so, and then the title began its evolution into the great Silver Age comic which featured Superman and Batman in their famous team-up adventures.

But looking back to the early years of its long publishing history, it's amazing to consider the blockbuster marquee of main characters World's *Finest Comics* had to offer... as well as one of the strongest supporting casts in comic book history.

All Star Comics, Leading Comics, and *Comic Cavalcade* would take full advantage of the path *World's Finest* blazed before them. But the special "flavor" of the early *World's Finest,* especially those first 17 "cardboard cover" issues, are somehow more than just 96 page, quarterly "giants". To me they symbolize the wonder and mystique that continues to draw collectors into the world of the Golden Age... year after year. ■

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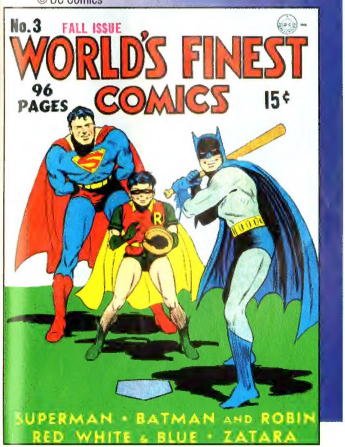

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